

SLINGSHOT

Attack of the Blue Meanies

● ● ● ● ● ● ● Long Haul Infoshop regroups after police raid

By Jesse D. Palmer

When the police and FBI raided the Long Haul Infoshop in Berkeley August 27 with guns drawn, seizing every computer in the building, looking through files, and breaking locks, they were probably hoping they would scare us, disrupt our operations, and distract us from radical work and into a defensive mode.

While the raid against our volunteer-run library and radical community center was an outrageous attack on a peaceful community of free-thinkers and activists, we are bruised but not defeated. In the weeks since the raid, the Long Haul scene and our supporters around the world have rallied. Long Haul remains open the same as before the raid — full of life, events and energy. Many concerned individuals have donated computers to replace the ones stolen by the police, some of which are still being held hostage in an FBI forensics lab somewhere as of press date. Our resolve to struggle for people over profits, local control, and environmental sustainability is stronger than ever.

Anatomy of a police raid

No one was at Long Haul at the time of the raid and as of press date, no one has been arrested for any crime related to the raid. University of California police — even though Long Haul is 2 miles from campus — obtained an extremely broad search warrant after they traced a number of threatening emails that were sent to UC Berkeley animal researchers to the dsl internet connection at Long Haul.

The cops never would have gotten such a broad search warrant if the computers had been at a public library, rather than at a radical Infoshop.

The raid by 7 officers — UCPD plus a county sheriff and one federal agent — started at 10:15 a.m. and lasted for an hour and a half. UCPD police spokesperson Mitch Celaya claimed the raid included members of the Joint Terrorism Task Force, according to the Berkeley Daily Planet. City of Berkeley police were not involved in the raid nor were they provided advance warning of the raid, as is the usual procedure according to City Council member Kriss Worthington.

When Long Haul volunteers arrived shortly after the raid began and asked police to see a search warrant, the police said they would only provide a copy of the warrant after the raid. The cops refused to allow volunteers inside the building during the raid. Police seized 14 computers including computers from a free public access computer room and two computers used by Slingshot collective to publish this newspaper and our organizer. They looked at lending library records and other files. They also took most of our music CDs perhaps thinking they might have computer data on them. Luckily, they didn't take the dumpster-dived vinyl record collection, which is the real backbone of Long Haul's music reality.

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Critical Resistance

Organizing to abolish the Prison Industrial Complex



Critical Resistance — the key prison abolitionist organization — just celebrated its tenth anniversary with a huge conference in Oakland, California. Here's an interview with CR member Rose Braz.

By Hans Bennett

HB: What does "prison abolitionist" mean?

Rose Braz: CR seeks to abolish the prison industrial complex (PIC): the use of prisons, policing and the larger system of the prison industrial complex as an "answer" to what are social, political and economic problems, not just prisons.

Abolition defines both the goal we seek and the way we do our work today. Abolition means a world where we do not use prisons,

policing and the larger system of the prison industrial complex as an "answer" to what are social, political and economic problems. Abolition means that instead we put in place the things that would reduce incidents of harm at the front end and address harm in a non-punitive manner when harm does occur. Abolition means that harm will occur far less often and, that when harm does occur, we address the causes of that harm rather than rely on the failed solutions of punishment. Thus, abolition is taking a harm reductionist approach to our society's problems.

Abolition means creating sustainable, healthy communities empowered to create safety and rooted in accountability, instead of relying on policing, courts, and imprisonment which are not creating safe communities.

HB: How has prison changed in 10 years?

RB: One recent shift is that our denunciation of conditions inside has been twisted into justifications for expanding the system, particularly through what are sometimes called "boutique prisons".

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Requiem for an Oak Grove

by Compost

They cut down our beloved Oak Grove. It was an epic struggle pitting Berkeley activists and neighbors and a ragtag group of tree-sitters against the legal and financial might of the University of California with its plans to build a high-tech gymnasium to enhance their football program, three stories into the earth adjacent to the Hayward earthquake fault. The University, not beholden to the municipal laws against cutting old oak trees, nor the desires of their host community, presented their plans for Berkeley as a done deal and expected to plow ahead as usual. But the Oak Grove called our hearts and we rose to protect her. We filed lawsuits, we made phone calls, we conducted educational tours of Strawberry Creek, we marched to the Chancellor's home and most noticeable of all we sustained the longest North American urban tree-sit in the branches between a city street and the Memorial Stadium.

Even as my heart aches from the destruction of these beautiful living elder trees and the community of animals and people it sustained, I am so grateful we made our stand.

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SLINGSHOT

Slingshot is an independent radical newspaper published in Berkeley since 1988.

In the moments after the police and FBI raided our offices at Long Haul — seizing all Slingshot computers and looking through our files — we wondered if we shouldn't delay publication of this issue to give us time to regroup and recover. It is a funny thing when cops take your computers especially if you don't really like computers in the first place. Maybe we shouldn't bother to try to get them back — maybe we should free ourselves from this machine dependence.

Within a few days, we regained our composure and realized publishing this issue — on time and as awsome as possible — was our best response to the police raid. So here it is. We initially discussed doing a shorter issue, avoiding articles that needed extra work, trying not to stay up so late or push ourselves as hard. These would actually be reasonable ideas every issue — why do we need a police raid as an excuse to balance our passion for making Slingshot with remembering to eat well, sleep more than 5 hours, and take time to dig in the garden between long-ass meetings?

Making this paper is a massive amount of work — it takes a dozen of us two weekends working long hours and requires a lot of organization and attention to detail. But it doesn't feel like work — we don't get tired — we look forward to doing Slingshot.

Artnoose wrote "Slingshot loft is the fountain 'o youth" on a piece of paper where we make Slingshot and we keep realizing how true this is. While we were making the 2009 Slingshot Organizer, we realized that making Slingshot is like staying up half the night at a really good dance party, except that instead of dancing, we write stuff, edit it, make art, and try to figure out what record to put on and what we're going to eat next.

The flood of creativity, bonding and getting to know other people in the collective — cooperating and struggling and discussing — you feel engaged, alive and present. It feels like you're young and fresh — as opposed to the times you feel checked out, stuck in a rut, unable to get beyond the daily grind and see beyond the messy psychic spaces you inhabit. It is clear that feeling youthful isn't mostly about your age. Making Slingshot or giving your all to any project isn't a "sacrifice to the cause" — it's a gift to enjoy and share with others that makes life meaningful.

And yet life isn't always meaningful or inspiring or even possible to comprehend. We keep grappling with the stark contradictions between the moments of grief, regret, heartbreak, and the moments when everything falls into place and makes sense.

Right before Slingshot collective started working on this issue, we heard that a collective member had fallen off an overpass and was in the hospital with spinal injuries. As of press time, we don't know what happened or whether she will be okay. She wrote an email a few days before the fall saying "my mental health is deteriorating this past month and I am thinking of going in hospital." We are so fragile and so alone and yet we are also part of something larger than ourselves — we have to be to find joy in this life.

The government fucked us over again on September 11 when they changed the rules for mailing items "bound printed matter" so that this cheaper class of mailing is only available to huge corporations, not independent zines like us. As we go to press, we aren't sure how we'll be able to mail out this issue . . . These creeping barriers to the free exchange of information are just as powerful as police raids, only harder to notice. And yet we're not going to let all this put us off being part of the struggle for liberation.

Slingshot is always looking for new writers, artists, editors, photographers, translators, distributors & independent thinkers to make this paper. If you send something written, please be open to being edited.

Editorial decisions are made by the Slingshot collective, but not all the articles reflect the opinions of all collective members. We welcome debate and constructive criticism.

Thanks to all who made this: Compost, Crystal, Dominique, Eggplant, Ginger, Gregg, Hunter, JB, Kathryn, Kelly, Kermit, Kirsty, Lesley, Lelah, Max, Mando, Melissa, PB, Samantha and all the authors and artists.

Slingshot New Volunteer Meeting

Volunteers interested in getting involved with Slingshot can come to the new volunteer meeting on Sunday, November 30, 2008 at 4 p.m. at the Long Haul in Berkeley (see below.)

Article Deadline and Next Issue Date

Submit your articles for issue 99 by January, 17 2009 at 3 p.m.

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A friend just emailed me the communiqué "Porn Again Anarchists" (Slingshot #70) — and I am intrigued by this, as many folks seem to believe I have a talent for expressing my lustful fantasies. But I don't know, I just wanna have fun and make people go orgasmic. So, now I see that you are looking for submissions, and this is right up my alley because I love submissions because there is nothing more anti-authoritarian than having some hot babe render you into their plaything, don't you think? Speaking of consenting adults of course. I know I enjoy it. My favorite radical pose is on my knees, tongue extended, slurping a load from the Motherland... Anyway...so if I become inspired -- and develop a craving to submit -- how do I do it? Just send something to Slingshot submissions? And also -- are you looking for screenplays only, or are little

exercises in fantasy prose desired? What is appropriate for your format? I am already thinking of a potential idea:

"I was a Sex-Slave for a Stalinist Hack!"

Young innocent student succumbs to the attractions of a charismatic leftist militant -- and soon gets a real taste of Party discipline! But then comes an uprising as she gets her hands on his means of production, and this is not just a wildcat, but a wild pussy on the loose! Our militant calls in his goons to reestablish authority, but our sex-pot turns the tables on

NOT TO BE TRUSTED

May 13, 2008

Dear PB Floyd,
In Slingshot issue # 97 (P.15) you say
".... we hate computers" and therefore you are
a liar and can not be trusted.

Sincerely,
D.G.P.
DAVID G. PEARSON



Compiled by PB Floyd

The recent police raid on the Long Haul Infoshop in Berkeley (Slingshot's home base) points out how important radical community spaces, alternative libraries, bike kitchens and infoshops are. The cops figured that the best way to go after a leaderless, informal scene was to go after its leaderless, informal meeting space. Luckily, the cops can take our computers but they can't destroy our community and they can't scare us off.

Alternative spaces that operate outside of the mainstream economy are dangerous to the smooth operation of the corporate-capitalist machine that is killing the earth. From these spaces, we can discuss more than the newest tv shows and organize activities more significant than retro-bowling leagues. These physical spaces represent the practical expression of our dreams for how life could be different. Organized cooperatively rather than by bosses and operated to promote creativity, freedom and autonomy instead of profit and conformity, alternative spaces are vital for building a new society.

As soon as we sent the 2009 Slingshot organizer to the printing press, people started sending us information on more spaces we should include. Oops — Too Late! While we were making the organizer we tried to contact everyone listed in the 2008 edition — so we hope the organizer list is pretty accurate. We're now doing better about updating our on-line radical contact list, which contains extra listings not included in the paper organizer (like email addresses and website links.) Check out slingshot.tao.ca. Here are some new spaces and updates.

Franklin House - St. Charles, MO

They are a collective house with an infoshop, show venue, community garden, free bike resource, art space and an "oasis in small town middle America." Check them out at 320

Tompkins Ave., St. Charles, MO 63301, 636-493-1239 franklinhousecollective@gmail.com

Fargo-Moorhead Community Bicycle Workshop - Fargo, ND

They are a non-profit bike shop committed to reclamation of bikes and education, as well as building community. Visit 1303 1st Ave N, Fargo, ND 58102, 701-478-4021 fmbikeworkshop.org

Tantra Coffeehouse - San Marcos, TX

They are a coffeehouse and community center with live music and an art venue. Open Sun-Fri: 7am-midnight and Saturday Sat 7am-1am. Visit at 217 W. Hopkins St. San Marcos, TX 78666 512-558-2233 www.myspace.com/tantracoffee

Everybody Reads - Lansing, MI

A community bookstore and neighborhood resource center that hosts various events. 2019 E. Michigan Avenue- Lansing, MI 48912 517 346-9900, becauseeverybodyreads.com

Bon Vivant Artspace - Buffalo, NY

A new art space and music venue. 1862 Hertel Avenue Buffalo, NY 14216.

Black Sheep Book - Montpelier, VT

They've moved into a new storefront space right on the main street of town that is more visible and bigger allowing events with up to 30 people. Send them some books, zines or donations to help them with this expansion. 5 State Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602 (802) 225-8906, http://www.blacksheepbooks.org

Casal Popular de Castelló - Spain

A radical social center. Carrer d'Amunt 167, 12001 Castelló de la Plana, South Catalonia, casalpopular@moviments.net

Ste. Emilie SkillShare - Montreal, Canada

A radical do it yourself art studio with a zine library/distro, silkscreen shop, photo darkroom,

these wanna-be Pol Pots, and its an orgiastic organizational meltdown that has to be seen to be believed! You'll be beating your meat in your seat as you see: ---> Leninists getting anally probed by Trotskyists! A Stalinist Central Committee becoming a circle jerk of a bunch of jerks! Militants kissing ass! See a dead movement go limp! Watch a bunch of liberals not go all the way! You'll just wet your pants as you see communist cadre eating shit and learning to love it! Yum Yum! It's coming soon and so will you! "I was a Sex-Slave for a Stalinist Hack!" have a nice day... Kathy

sewing machines and button maker that hosts workshops and events. Open Saturdays. 3942 Ste. Emilie (corner of St. Augustin, metro Place St. Henri), Montreal QC H4C 2A1 514-933-2573 (messages), steemilieskillshare.com / mtlskillshare@gmail.com

Mistakes in the 2009 Organizer. . .

- Oops — after publishing their name in the 2009 organizer we got mail back from the Radish Infoshop at 818 W. College St Springfield, MO 65806 marked "return to sender, - attempted - not known" — either they have moved or ceased to exist.
- We also got a letter mailed to New World Resource Center at 1300 N. Western Ave. in Chicago returned in the mail.
- Due to space considerations, we didn't list some places. The Junto Library in Winnipeg, Canada DOES exist — 91 Albert St.
- We weren't sure whether Little Sisters in Vancouver, BC, Canada was still around or not — we didn't list them but someone says "they're still there."
- We listed the Women's Agenda for Change in Phnom Penh, Cambodia but have since gotten word that they are in transition and they may not be in a good place to receive visitors. They may dissolve in mid-2009.
- Here are some places in Halifax, Nova Scotia that you may want to visit if you're in town — we got this info too late to include in the 2009 Organizer: • Halifax Coalition Against Poverty • Just Us! Cafe (Spring Garden or Barrington locations) • The Grainery Food Coop. They also have a Food Not Bombs in Halifax.

Circulation Information

Subscriptions to Slingshot are free to prisoners, low income and anyone in the USA with a Slingshot Organizer, or \$1 per issue or back issues. Outside the Bay Area, we'll mail a free stack of copies of Slingshot to you if you give them out free.

Keeping it Together in Interesting Times

By k. counterbalance

I often feel upset that in an activist scene that is about awareness of the problems in the world I find that — while we may be accomplished at taking action regarding the problems we see — we can be quite unskilled at talking about the emotions and feelings that these issues bring up. I worry that in our frantic reactions to recent events, we will not recognize the need to be mindful of our emotional and psychological states. I fear that emotional or psychological work may be the first or “easiest” thing to give up or overlook in a crisis (ironically, when we need to pay attention the most).

Recent events have been personally unsettling to me: several FBI arrests of people I know, the collective I work with got audited twice in one month (state, not federal — and this has never happened before in the 10 years I have been working with this group), now the raid at Long Haul and events/arrests at the RNC that seem to have barely made the news.

This all weighs heavy on the community and can take a toll on us individually and collectively. My question is, what might be the emotional or psychological fallout of state repression and what can we do to take care of ourselves and each other?

Emotional and psychological impacts of repression

Harvard ecopsychologist Sarah Conn notes “Much of the burnout that occurs...in social change organizations occurs because there is no acknowledgment of the powerful emotions involved in living as part of a threatened world and working to save it. Indeed, one of the central barriers to constructive initiatives for social change is the taboo on public expression or even acknowledgment of these emotions. Breaking through the taboo and harnessing the power of our emotional connections is essential work to be done...”

Activist, psychotherapist, and author Patrice Jones confirms that in many forms of activist or social work “the cumulative impact of doing emotionally difficult work over a period of years can lead to the same difficulties in living caused by dramatically traumatic events.” I worry that the toll activist work (often draining) can exact coupled with the recent upsurge in (visible) repression may accumulate into increased occurrences of burnout and breakdown. Some emotional reactions to be aware of are: fear and intimidation, stress/anxiety, anger/rage, feelings of violation/helplessness, suspicion/feelings of betrayal, fragmentation/in-fighting, and feelings of disconnection or emotional numbness. Any

combination of these (or others) may come up and, while understandable, if left unattended, they could turn in on us and cause personal or group problems.

Jones also talks about collective trauma: “Groups of people may experience trauma collectively, as when...an organization is subjected to police action. The collective reaction may be complicated since trauma tends to interfere with relationships, but people who experience the same trauma often feel a special kinship with one another.” Ultimately, the good news is that these kinds of events can bring us together. If we handle it well, and don't forget to pay attention to our emotions then our groups can get stronger. The next question is how can we help each other through these situations?

Ideas for emotional/psychological work we can do:

On a personal level-

*Don't forget the basics - eat well, get enough sleep, get enough physical activity. Also remember to drink enough water and resist the

urge to drink too much alcohol (or whatever too much) which can be especially attractive when stress levels go up, but ultimately make it harder for your body and mind to cope.

*Do what you need to do to take care of yourself — this might include talk therapy, body work, yoga/exercise, medication, getting outside, meditation, etc — for me the right formula is running/biking, yoga, massage therapy, being outside/gardening, talk therapy, anti-depressants, meditation/dharma talks, and baths. Remember that you are important — take time for yourself so you can continue to do activism, political work, or whatever you do to be engaged in the world!

*Stay engaged with other people, don't get isolated. Talk to folks about how you (and they) are feeling. Check in with yourself on a physical level too — emotions exist on both a physical and social level.

*Take time away when you need it — it is ok to take a break.

On a group level -

*At meetings start with check-ins to talk about how folks are feeling — while this might feel time consuming or petty it will ultimately make the group healthier. I recently attended a

meeting where we did stretching/yoga together spontaneously before the meeting and it really helped to ground and focus folks (I realize this might be a little too woo-woo for some!).

*There will likely be issues and disagreements that come up in high intensity situations — as a group, think about how to do constructive conflict resolution. Make room for folks, stay open-minded, remember to have empathy and compassion — everyone deals with difficult situations differently.

*Acknowledge emotions — learn how to see them and sit with them — this can be powerful work that positively fuels activism — if we are aware of emotions such as fear then they won't control us.

*Organizations and groups are collections of relationships — nurture those relationships by being present with each other and seeing what is happening with each other. Healthy interpersonal relationships create strong and stable projects.

*Celebrate successes — say thank you to each other for all the hard work! Why does this so often not happen? In all my group work, I feel I often hear criticism more than I hear praise. Celebration and praise will help us to continue to do the work and not let police repression distract us from it. Hell, folks deserve praise for just continuing to operate after repressive state actions!

This is just a short collection of ideas; I'm sure folks have many others, talking about these ideas is a good starting point to open up dialogue about how we are handling things on an emotional level. I've been told that after the raid at the Long Haul something like 20 computers were donated, tons of people have sent monetary support, and dozens of lawyers have offered their services. This is all amazing. Now imagine if talk therapists, massage therapists, yoga instructors, meditation instructors, and group dynamic/conflict resolution experts had shown up to offer their services!

So often crisis can bring out the best in us. We see our communities rallying to support each other and our visions for a better future are confirmed in the present. We are all in this together, and we know it. Let's take it up a notch and bring discussions of our emotional lives and of the psychological impacts of repression to the table. Our communities and our continued political work will be healthier for it. For further information on this topic, I highly suggest Patrice Jones' book *AfterShock: Confronting Trauma in a Violent World — A Guide for Activists and Their Allies* as well as Laura van Dernoot Lipsky's *Trauma Stewardship: An everyday guide to caring for self while caring for others*.



RNC 8... thousand???

Cops conspire to shut down Welcoming Committee

By Gregg and PB Floyd

When police in Minneapolis/St. Paul raided numerous activist houses and the Convergence Center on the eve of the Republican National Convention (RNC) to preemptively arrest alleged key-organizers of the RNC Welcoming Committee (RNCWC) before protests had even begun, it marked a further escalation of police tactics against street protest. The Welcoming Committee was an umbrella organization created to organize protests against the RNC. Police charged eight activists with felony charges of “Conspiracy to Riot in Furtherance of Terrorism” for their involvement in the RNCWC — a heavy over-reaction to activities that amounted to organizing public street protests. Monica Biking, Eryn Trimmer, Luce Guillen Givins, Erik Oseland, Nathanael Secor, Robert Czernik, Garrett Fitzgerald, and Max Spector face up to 7 1/2 years in jail if convicted. They have been dubbed the RNC 8 which strangely rings the tone of the Chicago 8.

A search warrant affidavit demonstrates the police over-reaction and intent to go after the activist community as terrorists for daring to call for street protests. Cop language implies

that the RNCWC are tantamount to the Mafia: “The RNCWC is an organized criminal enterprise who have conspired with affinity groups throughout the United States to come to St. Paul, MN during the RNC and utilize criminal activities to disrupt and stop the RNC.”

The heavy emphasis of the affidavit on conspiracy charges and the implication that these could attach to activist affinity groups across the US is particularly disturbing since one can be guilty of conspiracy even if you don't actually commit a substantive crime. You can be convicted of conspiracy merely for agreeing with others to do something illegal — such as street blockades, etc. — even if you never step off the sidewalk.

The cop affidavit is full of wild exaggeration based on police infiltration and surveillance of the RNCWC for over a year prior to the RNC: “On 8/29/07, the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office (RCSO), Special Investigations Unit (SIU) initiated an investigation, along with other law enforcement agencies, into the RNC Welcoming committee (RNCWC).” The affidavit claims the Welcoming Committee sought to kidnap delegates, assault police officers with firebombs, and sabotage airports,

none of which ever happened. It reads more like a police fantasy about comic book anarchist action figures than what real activists talk about at open meetings. But in the end, unlawful assembly seems to be the bottom line: “This conspiracy includes criminal damage to property, riot, civil disorder, use of incendiary devices and unlawful assembly.”

Perhaps most disturbingly, the police affidavit makes clear how thoroughly they infiltrated RNCWC activities. “This investigation has utilized regular surveillance of members of the RNCWC. Additionally, an Undercover Investigator (UI) and a Confidential Reliable Informant (CRI1) were utilized and posed as members of the RNCWC. CRI1 was utilized as a paid informant. . . . This investigation also had access to information provided by a Confidential Reliable Informant (CRI2) from another law enforcement agency. . . . This CRI was also posing as a member of the RNCWC.” The affidavit confirms that the police put the convergence center under surveillance from the moment it opened and kept track of who went in and out.

If you had anything to do with the RNCWC

over the last year, you can't help but feel paranoid — was the person I talked to a cop? Does the FBI have my name? Will they come after my affinity group next? The police had access to RNCWC email lists: “Through the use of UI, CRI1 and CRI2, this investigation had access to RNCWC group emails (also referred to as 3rd Coast list).”

Creating mass fear is precisely the point of these types of police operations. They seek to chill thousands of regular people from daring to engage in street protests by targeting a few individuals and letting us all know we're being watched. The activist scene has two responses: refusing to be frightened off and supporting our comrades who the police seek to sacrifice as scapegoats.

The RNC 8 needs support during their trial and beyond. At the moment, they need to raise money for a vigorous legal defense. Many people are hosting benefits and spreading the word. You can write checks to “CUAPB” and put “RNC 8” in the memo. Send them to: RNC 8 Legal Defense Fund, c/o CUAPB, 3100-16th Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55407 or check out RNC8.org.

Transcend Capitalist Logic

By Karl MacDermott

As banks fail and the political-news cycle continues to obsess about staving off the impending global financial failure, it is important for those of us who claim to be against capitalism and the increased power of the state to understand what is happening and think about how we might interact with collapse (and the material and emotional ramifications of it) in a way that is sustainable.

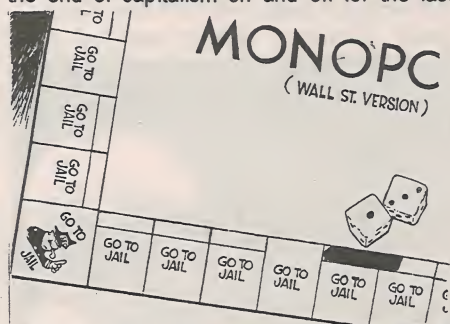
It is difficult, at this point, to know how much of the latest crisis will translate into tangible effects for people who are not large stakeholders in the market system. The power of any successful state structure lies in its ability to make the vast majority of people feel that their own goals, inspiration, and identities are linked to the success of its power players, that each citizen's well-being is tied to that of the system. Capitalist states do this by presenting the convincing illusion that each and every person or family is just a small scale model of a legal corporation, and that problems for the corporations always presage problems for actual persons, whose overriding motivation must necessarily be to acquire more economic power. Because of this, financial ups and downs that actually affect a relatively small subset of the population concretely are routinely presented as important for everyone to be either proud of or worried about.

The leadership of all political parties have the same task: to make the power structure that is in place work better by proposing minor adjustments. This government in particular claims to have an ideological, almost religious faith in what they see as the justice of market forces. Acts that challenge the supremacy of the 'free market' by restricting its growth are seen as heretical. The only alternative presented is an increase in the power and jurisdiction of the state, either replacing the one god for the other or finding some sort of equilibrium between the two. This is the discussion surrounding the recent financial meltdown and resulting government bailout.

The truth, however, is that neither the market, nor the state are omnipotent godheads but have, in fact, been created by people and survive, in large part, because people in the

world choose, actively or passively, to believe in their power and reality. I am not saying that the effects of the market will cease to exist if you just stop believing in them. At this point the market, like the state, has become this very real thing that can and does easily destroy people. I am merely pointing out that today's economic totality is not eternal and its laws are not absolute: there was a time when it did not exist and there will be a time when it will no longer exist.

The fact that the system seems so weak at this moment could lead one to wax optimistic about the opportunity it gives us to create communities of people that are autonomous and practice mutual aid, building new worlds out of the ashes of the old: indeed, it is always time to be doing that. It is also important to note however, that people have been heralding the end of capitalism on and off for the last



hundred and sixty years and so far its moments of crisis have led to stronger states, and increased authoritarianism (including actual fascism) more often than they have led to beautiful alternatives.

If we are going to be people who are both critical of the world as it is and honest about our actual relationship to it, then we have to acknowledge that we, as individuals and communities, are not separate from or immune to the effects of an economic collapse. The collapse of capitalism, when it eventually comes, will not be pretty or easy. Most people, including anyone dependant on banks, supermarkets, or fossil fuels for their survival will face uncomfortable new realities. The 1929 stock market crash led to unemployment, starvation and homelessness on an unprecedented scale, in the US and around the world.

The rational fear generated by these realities can certainly lead people to be more conservative, less trusting, and more willing to submit to whichever authority promises some measure of stability. Yet there is also a way that pressure imposed on people during times of hardship can act as a catalyst for more

identify dangers, assess risks, and make decisions about how to proceed. The truth is there is no way to prepare completely for any catastrophic event, be it global climate change, a hurricane, great economic depression, or the death of a friend. We do not get to choose what the world throws at us, but our freedom lies in the ability to choose how we engage with it.

We do not get to choose what the world throws at us, but our freedom lies in the ability to choose how we engage with it.

positive emotions, forcing people to rely on themselves and each other and to live life more intentionally. The fact that this latest economic crisis comes at a time when we are also facing an ecological disaster means that the possibilities are particularly stark. Will people, by in large, jettison their environmental concerns because they are perceived as too expensive, or decide to change the way that they interact with the ecosystem because it is too costly not to? Questions like this exist on a multitude of overlapping levels. Choosing to let these be opportunities for positive transformation is something every body can do in the context of their own lives.



It is important not to minimize the very real fear that comes with economic crisis, but it is as important to engage with that fear constructively and not let it overpower us. Living on edge, in a place of anxiety and insecurity is not a sustainable practice. Fear that is denied, or unacknowledged, lurks forever in the background of our consciousness until we are not even able to trust ourselves with the responsibility of keeping it at bay. Recognizing our fears and understanding where they come from can transform them into tools that helps us better

More concretely, it is possible to take steps and build networks that make us less dependent on the solvency of economic capital, and more able to depend on each other outside the protocol of economic relations. Investing in the relationships in our lives is crucial: so many of our connections to other people are mediated by money. The more that we can learn to know and trust one another, the more prepared we will be to both give and receive love and mutual aid when shit hits the fan and the less likely we are to feel isolated and afraid.

It is also important to invest in our own knowledge of how to take care of ourselves materially outside of the context of fossil driven trade and technology. During the depression of 1930's most people still possessed the knowledge of how to preserve food without refrigeration, to bake their own bread, mend their own clothes and tend their own gardens. There may come a time when these skills will again become necessary and knowing how to be more self-sufficient is an empowering defense against worry and despair.

There is a way that these moments of instability, as difficult as they are, test our ability to transcend capitalist logic and dependency. By nurturing goals and following passions that are not expressed through the acquisition of economic power we can stop playing into the hand of the state. By developing relationships of mutual support that we can trust — and learning how to do things for ourselves — we can prevent the kind of overwhelming fear and insecurity that breeds reactionaries and begin to play with each other, for ourselves.

EcoDefender NEWS

Update on
Eric McDavid
& others

By SoDak Attack

On May 8, 2008, the United States government sentenced Eric McDavid to 19 years and 7 months behind bars for a crime that was never committed. Eric was arrested in January of 2006 and charged with "conspiracy to destroy property by means of fire or explosives". However, no actual property damage ever occurred. The government's fear of "eco-terrorists" has made Eric just one defendant in a string of arrests known as the Green Scare. The undercover snitch "Anna" was paid \$75,000 by the FBI to help frame Eric for conspiracy. Eric's sentence was extended with the use of the government's Terrorism Enhancement Measure. For more information on sending money for his appeal case please visit www.supporteric.org. Write to Eric at:

Eric McDavid 16209-097
FCI Victorville Medium II
PO Box 5700
Adelanto, CA 92301

What is terrorism
enhancement?

United States Sentencing Guideline (USSG) 3A1.4 is a Terrorism Enhancement Measure that allows judges to increase a sentence if the offense "involved or was intended to promote a federal crime of terrorism." This loosely worded measure means that any crime, committed or conspired, that is aimed at affecting the conduct of government or property used in interstate commerce would be defined as a terrorist activity. This means extra jail time, even 6 fold the sentence, as witnessed by the "Operation Backfire" arrests. Because of the terrorist label, prisoners are also housed in high security prisons, with more restrictions. However, judges are not obligated to follow this sentencing guideline.

Briana Waters

Briana Waters, 14th victim of Operation Backfire was sentenced in Tacoma, Washington on July 19, 2008. Briana was sentenced to a 6 year prison term with 3 years of probation. She is accused of being involved in the bombing of the University of Washington's Center for Urban Horticulture. She maintains her innocence and is currently in an appeal process. Briana is being held at a federal prison in Danbury, Connecticut even though she requested a facility in Dublin, California to be closer to her family and 3-year-old daughter. Yet another victim of the terrorism enhancement sentencing measure. www.supportbriana.org

Daniel McGowan

On July 14, 2008, Daniel McGowan appeared in federal court in Madison, Wisconsin and was found in civil contempt for refusal to answer questions before a grand jury. McGowan was charged in 2007 with arson and is serving a 7 year sentence. Until the grand jury is dismissed or resolved, he will not receive time served. An appeal has been filed by his lawyer as well as a motion for bail. Please write to Daniel at:
Daniel McGowan
USP Marion
PO Box 1000
Marion, IL 62959

Beyond Capitalist Food Production

How and why I made a solar fruit dryer

Autumn 2008 • Slingshot • Page 5

By PB Floyd

This past summer, I built a solar fruit drier to preserve fruit that my housemates and I gathered from neighbors' yards. The solar drier helps close the circle on my personal campaign to step off the fossil fuel powered food system by re-learning how people used to get their food before the industrial age. I've learned that growing or gathering my own food for free — even in an urban environment — is not only possible, it is deeply enjoyable and very educational. When you connect with your own food, you learn about alternative ways to measure time — guided by the sun and the seasons, not clocks and human make-believe. You learn to talk to your neighbors and find ways to cooperate with them, rather than just trying to stay out of each other's way. You learn about distributing food outside the capitalist market system. And you learn a lot of very tangible do-it-yourself skills. This article provides simple plans for building your own solar fruit drier, and describes why you might want to.

The way we currently live and eat — in a very complex, high-tech, corporate food production and distribution systems totally dependent on fossil fuels — is killing the earth with global warming, soil depletion, ocean dead-zones and poisons. These systems subjugate people to the needs of the market and concentrate power in a few hands while removing most of us from any understanding of how things work. We lack a real voice in deciding how the economy is operated.

How is it that "low-tech" people 100 years ago could grow their own food and live in balance with the earth, but modern people with all our development and learning can't seem to do the simplest human things — like eating — without damaging our only home's life support systems?

How is it that with such a high "standard of living" due to all of this industrialization, people are so sad, so lost, so confused, so addicted, so unhealthy? The high-tech modern world hasn't brought us happiness or meaningful engaged lives equal to the resources it consumes, the cultures it destroys, and the people it dominates. Could it be that most people's actual level of satisfaction, humanity and engagement was *higher* before we had all these fancy industrial toys?

I don't know but I can say that I've found a measure of connectedness, meaning, beauty, and calm as I've re-joined life's web as an active participant — rather than merely as a consumer — by growing, gathering, processing, distributing and enjoying home-grown food. This is slow food on the cheap — do-it-yourself slowness, not just another food fad offering expensive products for you to buy after a long day at work.

So back to the solar fruit drier. The main type of food I've been able to gather in the Bay Area is fruit. As described in previous *Slingshot* articles, if you look around your neighborhood, you start to notice lots of fruit trees that aren't getting harvested — the fruit is just falling on the ground. If you knock on the door, your neighbors are often happy to let you harvest their tree, and you're building community in the process.

But what you learn as soon as you start gathering fruit is that the biggest problem is having way too much all at once. What to do? Going beyond capitalist ideas of ownership is a good first step — figure out how you can give away the fruit you just gathered. Get on your bike and ride around to friends, infoshops, farmers markets — I like to give free food out at Critical Mass Bike rides. At the end of the day, you'll still have more than you need, and that is where preserving food comes in.

Food is the oldest method of preserving food because it is the easiest. In all climates, you can simply cut up fruit you harvest, spread it out in the sun, and it will dry. But this has a few problems which is why I built

a low-tech (but still nifty) indirect/pass-through fruit drier. If you dry fruit right out in the sun, the sun's rays bleach out some of the vitamins and nutrients in the food. You may have problems with bugs or other critters. If it rains, you're in trouble. Before this summer, my housemates and I used an electric powered fruit drier that worked well, but I didn't like the connection with a huge fossil/nuclear powered electricity grid.

I got the basic design for my drier from two excellent articles written by Dennis Scanlin published in *Home Power Magazine* (#57 and 69) and I made some modifications described here. I built the solar drier to sit on part of the (south facing) front steps of my house. It is built in two parts that unhook for winter storage: the solar collector and the drying box where you put the fruit. (See diagram.)

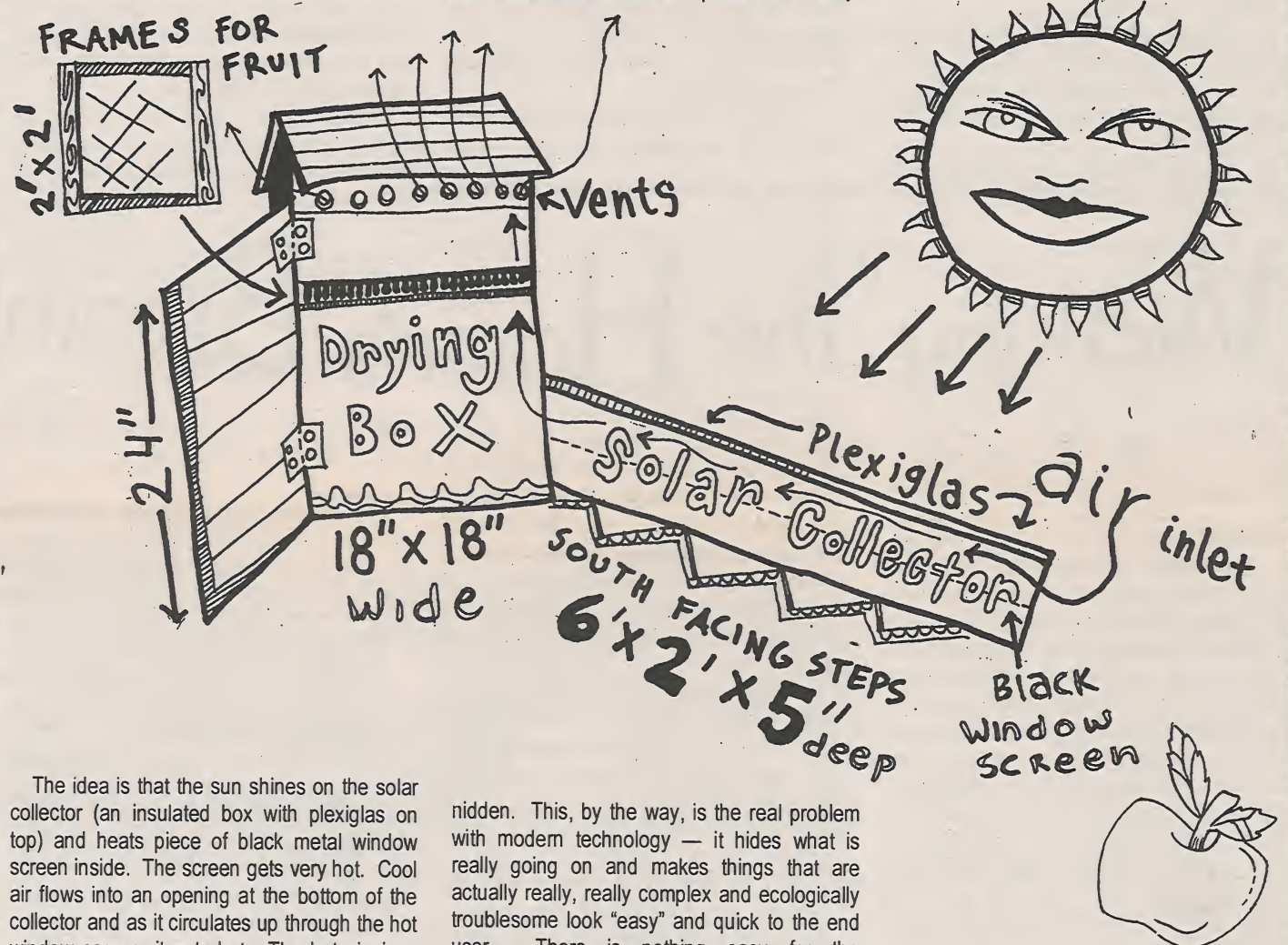
my house via bike trailer. The best black metal window screen is from New York Wire. I used old bike inner tubes cut in half to seal around the door on the drier box and between the solar collector box and the piece of plexiglas. The Scanlin article suggested using a special type of solar collector glass but I think anything clear (and cheap) will work just fine. The only error I made building the whole thing was using some duct tape to hold the rigid insulation together inside the drying box. Oops — the drier gets way too hot for duct tape!

The best part of this project is figuring out how to use it. When my housemates and I used the electric fruit drier, you could put the fruit in to dry anytime you wanted. You just flipped a switch and it worked — the fossil fuel use, capitalist labor, eco-destroying technology and centralized economic power all neatly

harvest it — "eating" fruit with no defects goes in the fruit bowl and wormy fruit gets dried.

This year I harvested, moved by bike, and solar dried apples, pears, peaches, apricots, tomatoes, plums and pluots (a cross between plums and apricots).

It isn't often in the modern world that you get to eat a truly fossil fuel free food product. By fossil fuel free food, I mean food that is grown, harvested, transported, processed, and distributed without burning fossil fuels. For me, that also means food that isn't bought or sold because the market economy is so soaked in oil. Once capitalism gets a hold of an alternative good or service like organic food, for instance, the real spirit is lost and producers just aim to meet the minimum standard of some legal definition. It is so ironic



The idea is that the sun shines on the solar collector (an insulated box with plexiglas on top) and heats piece of black metal window screen inside. The screen gets very hot. Cool air flows into an opening at the bottom of the collector and as it circulates up through the hot window screen, it gets hot. The hot air rises and pulls more cool air into the bottom of the collector creating a steady flow of air upward through the system.

At the top of the collector box, the hot air enters the drying box. It is just an insulated box with a door at the back. You build wood frames and stretch fiberglass window screen

hidden. This, by the way, is the real problem with modern technology — it hides what is really going on and makes things that are actually really, really complex and ecologically troublesome look "easy" and quick to the end user. There is nothing easy for the environment or human workers about using electricity or other forms of technology that tie your daily life to the death-machine.

But I digress. To use a solar fruit drier, you have to fit your schedule around the sun. This is a surprisingly difficult psychological shift. Modern people *hate* having to adjust their schedule to the earth or the sun. We have

I made the drier mostly from scrap lumber and a \$5 scrap of plexiglas from a local recycled building material center

over them on which you lay sliced fruit. At the top of the box, there are adjustable vents allowing hot air to escape. If you close the vents, the box will get hotter and if you open them more, the box will get cooler. During the day, hot air moves from the bottom of the box to the top vents, drying the fruit inside.

On an average day, temperatures in the box are 140 – 150 degrees, which is great for drying fruit. If the temperature gets hotter than 150 degrees, it can deplete vitamins from the fruit, so you have to open the vents on top more.

I made the drier mostly from scrap lumber and a \$5 scrap of plexiglas from a local recycled building material center (Urban Ore.) I had to spend about \$30 on the two types of window screen and a piece of rigid foam insulation that I moved from the lumberyard to

been socialized to want instant gratification and to be insulated from how things are. Using a solar drier means you have to wake up a half hour early and cut fruit to put in the drier before work, rather than doing it at night, because the fruit will get all brown and mushy if you cut it and leave it overnight waiting for the next day's sun.

In the cool and often foggy bay area climate, I've found that it usually takes a day and a half to dry fruit and that it dries unevenly. After the first day, I go through the fruit and pick out whatever has dried (usually smaller pieces.) The more uniformly you can slice the fruit, the better. Cutting up fruit to dry it meshes well with using home grown organic fruit since there are always a lot of pieces of fruit with worms or other defects that need to be cut up to be used. I usually grade the fruit when I

to think of people buying organic tv dinners at Whole Foods, the world's biggest and most centralized health food corporation, or buying organic milk shipped from a feedlot in Colorado. Organic?

We need to go beyond the organic label or even farmers' markets by re-connecting with the food we eat. I recently heard that a study found that the fossil fuel consumed per unit of food by farmers markets was actually *more* than industrial food because of economies of scale, i.e. lots of pickup trucks going short distances vs. a big semi moving more food longer distances, but for less fuel per unit. I don't know if this is true — I volunteer at an organic farm that sells at the Berkeley farmers' market and I'm convinced that the food they raise is better on many levels (psychic, land use, ecological) than Safeway.

To get out of the ecological collapse human society is currently creating, we have to re-think everything. That means re-claiming ancient ways of preserving our food with the sun, not fossil fuels. And it means recognizing that food is what connects us to the earth and to other species, — it isn't just another business. We are animals on an abundant earth and we are part of the food chain. Gathering, hunting and growing food is an essential human — and an essentially humanizing — act.

the politics of inclusion TIPS on Supporting Parents & Children

Let's make a better world without leaving out the mamas (and papas, partners, child-care providers) and children this time! Here are some concrete things you can do to support parents and children in your scene.

- 1- Give children attention. Say something to them: just be your true self, whatever you are thinking, they are open to that. Children act better when they get attention. In the beginning of a meeting if a group gives the children some attention, they are often happier and better behaved for the rest of the meeting.
- 2- Develop childcare as an ongoing relationship with a child - it takes some time to get to know a child before they are comfortable with doing stuff with you away from their parents.
- 3- Offer a slot of time, to spend time with a child on a weekly basis
- 4- Integrate children and adults: it's more pleasant to watch children with other adults to talk to; it's more pleasant for the children to see adults enjoying each other and not feel a burden to them.
- 5- Include children in the planning of any

activity, like a sewing workshop for instance.

- 6- Doing something child-friendly? Ask a kid if they want to come along. (Lizxnn has been taking Siu Loong for critical mass rides for three years and she loves it.) Children can benefit from activities their parents don't do and parents can benefit from the time to themselves.
- 7- If a baby is crying because it needs to be held and the parent has their hands busy and cannot hold it; offer to hold the baby.
- 8- If a child is making a disturbance in an area, offer to go outside with the kid so the parent doesn't have to leave the event.
- 9- Meet parents at their level: come visit them at home or where ever their spaces are. Let parents talk about being parents: realize having a child is like having the most intense love affair you have ever known (says one parent. Another says - not.)
- 10- Acknowledge children: don't treat them like they are invisible
- 11- To announce that we are OK with children making noise (at meetings we wish to make

parent-w/small children-friendly), we can talk over them, and value mothers and children sticking around. The announcement can help put mothers at ease.

12- Give us a smile!

ALSO - When providing child care at political events (and every event should have child care!)

13- Visit the children and childcare providers in daycare - and say "Hi!" Childcare providers can feel isolated from others at the event. Have a cup of tea with them! (suggested by Siu Loong, age 5)

14- Parents with different aged children have different needs. Parents with younger children or children who aren't comfortable leaving their side yet would benefit from childcare that was off to a side of the same room or more central to the main events. Parents with older and more independent children benefit from having them in a different room or floor. Either way, childcare must be assessable.

15- Parents need to give more input to the day-care providers, about their and their children's needs during the planning of the

event, in order for the childcare provider to better assist them. At least tell them you are coming and the age of your children.

16- It's comforting for parents to know childcare is available, even if they don't use it AND - Contemplate

17- How much work/consuming being a parent is: 24/7; in the beginning years it's hard to even think straight: one is still adjusting to being a parent and young children's needs are very intensive

18- That radical parents don't fit in at mainstream places, like their children's schools - so when they go to an anarchist gathering and don't feel supported by their own culture - how bad that feels.

These suggestions are from the "Don't Leave Your Friends Behind: Anarcha-feminism & Supporting Mothers and Children" workshop at La Revolta! To get a copy of the 22 page workshop handout: you can download it from: <http://bengal.missouri.edu/%7Emaxwellr/DontLeaveYourFriendsBehind.pdf> or send a dollar to Vikki Law P.O. Box 20388 NY NY 10009 or China Martens P.O. Box 4803 Baltimore MD 21211 USA

Waking to the Horse's Breath A Visit to the World of Work Trade



By saibot

Living without money is more fun! Work trade is where you work in exchange for room and board while you travel. In essence, it's probably the cheapest way to travel the world, meet people, and eat real good local foods. Every situation is different and there are cool and not so cool people to work for, as in the alternate capitalist Babylon world. This is something that everyone should experience. I did receive some government assistance through food stamps, and knowledge from work-trading in the New Orleans area that, if the emergency ever arose, to go to the emergency room without identification (at least in America) and they will treat whatever your condition may be. You may just need to play the character role of a mean person from back home, or just an imaginary friends name you know.

I won't say which Hawaiian island I was on when I got this dream position. I had previous knowledge of a local plant on the islands known as Kava, with the plants' name known as Awa (pronounced ava). It is a stress relieving drink that you make by taking the root of the plant and drying it in the sun. You then grind it into small bits or cut it very small, (some stores sell it as a powder or extract) and then put it into a cheese cloth, sock, or old t-shirt; basically anything that will strain it. You take some good filtered water, and pour over the kava into a big bowl, portions vary, but you're supposed to dip the kava into the water in the bowl and squeeze many times also. The water will turn a tan dirty color but obviously,

the darker the color, the more strong the kava will be! Native Hawaiians, before Captain Cook screwed everything up, would have political meetings, where everyone of importance would drink a coconut cup filled with Kava before meeting. Nobody fought, but issues were heard and complaints addressed. Sounds like we could all use some more kava in our lives right?

I took care of between 200-300 awa plants on a plot of land of about 3-4 acres in the middle of this wild valley known as the Valley of the Kings (hint hint). I had a mountain view in front of the plot of land, where the sun would

first hit around 6:16am. The valley floor we were situated in had about a mile wide mouth at the black sand beach at the ocean, and grew wider as you went further back into the valley.

My camp/situation was about a two-mile hike into the valley from the entrance, which was a long crazy super steep mile you needed four wheel drive for. I walked down many times, but only walked up a few. I went on many adventures just exploring the area, just as you should, explore your area.

I was dropped off on this amazing solo adventure with a shovel, an axe, a saw, a machete, a propane tank, stove hook-up, a box of dried food goods, two bags of my stuff (clothing, chess, soccer ball), also a bunch of matches, two lighters, a big straw hat, an army cot, and three blankets (one from the airlines). At the site, I found five five-gallon buckets and two spools of metal wire.

My mission that I chose to accept was three fold. 1) To work solo to keep the plants weeded and watered. 2) Plant keiki (baby) awa plants (80 in total) and 3) build tri-pod tee-pees to protect the awa plants from the wild horses trampling feet.

Sometimes I would wake up early in the morning, or late at night, to hear the horse breath through their mouths... if you've ever been around horses, you know what I mean. I'd slowly put on some shorts and slowly unzipped the tent and sneak outside. It'd be dark sometimes, dusk maybe, and I'd sneak up very slowly, as slowly as possible towards the horse(s). I'd move a bit faster than desired most of the time and the lead horse, or only one sometimes, would just stand and stare in my direction, or possibly right at me, for a long time, and I'd just stay perfectly still... and even more closer when they went to graze again. When I was close enough, or felt it was the right timing, I'd sprint towards them with a scream, flailing my arms around and they would bolt! There's nothing like scaring a large wild animal that you know is not going to attack you. A wild boar on the other hand... well it's another story.

We had no barbed wire fence around our plot to keep the horses and boars out, but we also had wild cats and mongoose in the valley. Mongooses were brought here the island to deal with the rat problem. The problem is rats

**All these experiences,
while suckling on the
teat of federal
assistance, made me a
better person.**



are awake at night, and mongooses are awake in the daylight. So they both just live separate lives, and now there are two problems instead of one. There were a bunch of awa plants areas with rocks around them that needed weeding, as well as there were individual plants scattered around the forest, as a forest planting. This specific farmed land had started about three years ago as that's how old the oldest awa plants were I was told.

There was an awesome section that had been planted by some kids I knew, one plot was in the shape of a peace sign, the other was two ovals in the shape of the moon two-thirds filled I guess; placed opposite each other, it became a vagina, their plan all along. It felt good to weed and water those plants. I had plans of building an earth oven as there had already been an existing L shaped rock

wall I could have turned into a C shaped structure with a space in the back for exhaust. All these plans were great on paper, but not practical for the amount of time I spent there vs. exploring and basic living. I used the fire pit under the bamboo structure for most of my cooking needs. I actually prided myself for not turning on the propane stove for the first week I was there... and I only turned it on when I got the tea kettle as the propane didn't burn the sides of the kettle as the fire had. Although I am an omnivore, the need for the kettle was there because all the water I boiled in the pot I brought tasted a bit like hot dogs... no good.

Another crazy thing that happened was the discovery of wild coffee trees in my back yard! It was tree dried (meaning raisin) in the month of May. And I just took these black dried berries off the trees from a bunch of neighbors places, in the understanding of course that it's easier to ask for forgiveness sometimes than permission (same with the bananas, mangos and papayas). You had to break open the black berry and you'd have two pods, and in each pod was a green coffee bean! At first I picked what I thought was a dosage of coffee for a single coconut cup, and roasted it over the fire in a pan, constantly moving it. It popped and crackled, and I believe I burned the beans on two occasions that I made cowboy coffee. I ground the coffee in a plastic bag bashing it with a rock, and it was some of the best tasting coffee I feel I ever drank.

All these experiences, while suckling on the teat of federal assistance, made me a better person. If you've ever worked for a job for over a year, you've paid your dues and deserve this sort of work-trade situation while getting food stamp benefits. Living also on lots of bananas, papayas, granolas, and other healthy food, including going prawn (shrimp) hunting was a blessed experience of an adventure. Yes I dug holes in the ground to do my business, but now I find peeing in a bowl of water not only wasteful, but also highly impractical... GO WATER A TREE or some other plants, and if you're stuck in a metropolis Babylon land someplace, until you break free... if it's brown flush it down, if it's yellow, keep it mellow!

A FIGHT TO STOP I-69 REVEALS THE BIGGER BATTLE

by affiliates of Roadblock Earth First!

In a massive police operation involving at least three Indiana law enforcement agencies, a tree-sit, blocking the construction of a superhighway was brought down in its fifth week on June 20th. Named Camp B-Rad in tribute to Brad Will, the tree-sit delayed the clearing of dead trees for the first leg of construction for several weeks and was declared a free state. Though the tree-sit was evicted, and eight activists were arrested, many on questionable charges, the fight to stop this road is far from over.

For seventeen years, opposition to the building of new terrain I-69 between Indianapolis and Evansville has been fought by citizens of Indiana, growing to overwhelming proportions. Even the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) has admitted that 75% of Indiana opposes its construction, and 94% of the 22,000 public comments on their Environmental Impact Statements condemn it. Many of these people, including those working with Roadblock Earth First! and the I-69 Listening Project, have come to realize that there is no democratic process in the building of I-69 – those with money and power simply don't care about the repercussions of their actions.

The I-69 will destroy 7,000 acres of land including the Patoka Wildlife Refuge and evict over 400 people including an Amish community. It is part of the NAFTA superhighway that will enable the most ugly visions of FREE TRADE. The road will go as far north as Ontario and is planned to run all the way south to Mexico. It will connect with superhighways of the controversial Plan Puebla Panama project in Mexico and Central America. The PPP will pave over previously untouched jungles and displace indigenous and rural communities, causing them to seek sustenance in new sweatshops brought to them by NAFTA or in the US where they would work for slave wages. All of this, just to feed American and Canadian consumer "needs."

With this future in mind, anti-I-69 activists constructed a tree-sit near Evansville, Indiana in protest of this completely undemocratic process, hoping to delay construction to allow local landowners time to take their cases to court and get a fair amount for having their lives ruined by this highway. The tree-sits erected on May 18 are known as "dunk'em sits," meaning that the platforms were held up by support lines running through pulleys that were attached to the trees. While the two trees occupied were not set to be cut, their support lines were tied off to 50-foot tall trees already cut down and set to be cleared by May 31 in order to prepare the area for the on- and off-ramps in the first 1.77 miles of construction this summer. Therefore, if anyone tried to cut the lines in order to clear the logs away, the platforms would drop sitters over forty feet. Police and media visited the tree-sit numerous times and were informed about the potential for injury or death repeatedly.

At 5:30 AM on June 20th, the five activists at the tree-sit awoke to thirty police officers swarming around woods of the tree-sit. The two tree-sitters, Andrew Joyce and Emily Cross, and the three on ground support, Laura Barnett, Nick Steinke, and Banu Quadir, were informed that they were being evicted from the grove and had fifteen minutes to leave before they would be arrested. The police also stated they would have no regard for the safety of those being evicted. The ground support crew chose to follow the instructions of the police, left the property, and walked on State Road 68 toward a nearby gas station at the intersection with SR 57. At this time, the police sent a negotiator up one of the occupied trees in an attempt to convince the sitters to come down. The sitters refused and one attempted to lock down. The police then used a cherry picker to remove both of the sitters, disregarding their



assertions that such actions endangered their safety.

Indiana State Police (ISP) arrested the three ground support crew for charges of obstructing traffic. tree-sit supporters in nearby Evansville were informed of the arrests and mobilized to observe the eviction. Two vehicles drove to the tree-sit which was an approximate 30 minute distance away.

At 6:30 AM, the first vehicle, a truck driven by Chad Frazier with two passengers riding in the bed (Michelle Soto and Eric Magas) left Evansville and soon realized they were being followed. They were stopped by ISP and Chad was tackled by police officers and forcibly shoved to the ground. One of the officers accused Chad of spitting on him, which he denied, and threatened to charge him with battery. Simultaneously, the two completely cooperative passengers were arrested at gunpoint and Michelle was shoved onto the hood of the truck. The second vehicle was stopped as well with the passengers being briefly detained and were threatened with

and various other law enforcement agencies to cripple the movement. At the second Gohmann demo 15 people were arrested solely on misdemeanor charges and yet the collective bail was upwards of \$40,000. Those arrested are facing between one and three charges, these being trespassing, resisting law enforcement, and conversion (exerting unauthorized use or control of someone else's property.) Many of these charges are groundless and clearly an attempt to intimidate activists into refraining from future actions against the road. No plea agreements have been accepted and trials dates are expected to be ongoing throughout the fall and possibly continue into the winter.

Additionally, a lawsuit, which appears to be a SLAPP suit, has been filed against the 16 individuals arrested at actions at the Gohmann Yard in Haubstadt, Indiana. A SLAPP suit is a Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation,

the movement against the I-69 and anyone who dreams of trying to stop this road.

Gohmann is filing a restraining order against all 16 people in a final attempt to quell their first amendment rights. The restraining order contains many over the top stipulations. Should it remain in place it would require that defendants remain a minimum of 100 yards away from any site that Gohmann has proprietary or monetary interest in. This would include all 1.77 miles of the route. The restraining order extends to many situations out of the control of defendants such as proximity to Gohmann trucks or driving by Gohmann sites.

According to many lawyers who have been consulted, the restraining order contains a law used to protect workers from potential stalkers and violence. A law typically used in domestic abuse situations is also cited. Clearly, this is an abuse of these laws, as none of the actions by defendants were violent, or intended to cause or threaten violence. Included in the restraining order were inflammatory documents and statements attempting to link defendants with extremist groups such as the Earth Liberation Front (an underground group which engages in sabotage and direct action in defense of the Earth). They attempted to link defendants to various other environmental groups with which they have no connection. It seems like an attempt to portray defendants as being part of a much broader network of eco-radicalism.

The legal situation can appear somewhat bleak right now. However, as one lawyer commented, "these are their biggest guns and they are pulling them out now, at the beginning." Often large companies or the state attempt to overwhelm smaller groups with a lot of legal bureaucracy, knowing that it is a greater burden for those with fewer resources. These are clearly scare tactics meant to consume our energy and time but legally appear to be fairly groundless. Despite these difficulties the defendants plan to continue fighting this on all levels and will not let these tactics of intimidation stop them.

Though the tree-sit only lasted for four and a half weeks, it was able to delay construction for over two weeks, given that Gohmann's clearing contract was supposed to end by May 31. Some of us foresee an even stronger campaign in the spring of 2009, as restraining orders and SLAPP suits are the most commonly used legal tools against activists; once we beat them, Gohmann will have nothing left. The restraining order is being handled by an Indiana ACLU lawyer and the civil suit is being handled by a friendly Indiana lawyer at a discount rate. The campaign is currently in a transition, as many long-terms have left the campaign and others leaving in the spring, but organizing among students and the leftist community of Bloomington is still happening.

We now call for folks to act in solidarity to let everyone involved with I-69 know that their participation is unwelcome and sinister. We also put out a call for fundraising, and the formation of affinity groups to travel to Southern Indiana to get to know the area for resistance next spring.

Besides the glamour of being shoved into the dirt by cops, we still need to organize community meetings, garden, fix bikes, cook food for large groups, go door-to-door, make flyers, hold workshops, find more housing, gather supplies, and lots more. If you are unable to come to Indiana and money is tight in your community, check out our wish-list at stopi69.wordpress.com/how-to-help, and send the supplies our way. Make sure you check out stopi69.wordpress.com/forum for the ride and supply boards.

Our contacts are greatly appreciated, sought. If you have any ideas or as please contact roadblockef@yahoo.com



arrest if they proceeded to the tree-sit.

The eight arrestees were taken to the Warrick County jail. The charges brought by the state prosecutor Todd Come included many questionable charges all of which were misdemeanors, except for Chad's two charges. All eight were bailed out for \$2450. We would like to note the wide variety of undue force, intimidation attempts, and unconstitutional tactics used by the police on June 20.

On May 19 two residential neighborhoods were visited by protesters chanting "I-69 Stop It Now" and "Polluting the land, polluting the water. Profiting off the earth's slaughter" in front of the homes of John and Michael Gohmann, contractors for Gohmann Asphalt. The company has been awarded the contract to construct the first 1.77 miles of I 69, and now have decided to start a legal battle with activists. Gohmann seems to be working in conjunction with the FBI, Indiana State Police

in which a corporation or developer sues an organization in an attempt to scare it into dropping protests against a corporate initiative. Gohmann is seeking restitution for alleged damages. It is clear that the supposed "damages" are completely fabricated or, at the very least, hugely inflated. Gohmann was initially seeking \$16,000 from the one individual arrested at the first action, but has since added the other 15 people arrested at the second action and increased the sought restitution to over \$27,000. Included in the lawsuit is a statute stating that the defendants are potentially liable for up to three times that amount. This exorbitant sum is being demanded, despite the fact that the first person arrested was offered a plea agreement for their criminal charges requiring only about \$330 in restitution for these supposed "damages." This incredibly exaggerated and inaccurate sum seems to be intended to crush



BARKING PIGS and H.O.P. Elbows: a personal reflection on the RNC riots

By Crystal Math

Left to make our way to the undisclosed location of our affinity group's action on our own terms, Monday began as all others did since Frenzy and I arrived in St. Paul, MN to protest the Republican National Convention: late starts, unfocused meetings, and the untrustworthy gaze of someone I am supposed to be trusting to save my ass in a dire situation. Instead, I only feel my ass would be served on a plate to the cops. There was such a strong presence of cops on East 7th Street where we got off the bus, much further from our sector and downtown than we'd originally expected.

I walked with another person, S and met up with H on our way there. He came by bicycle and reported back to us about the plan. "We're fucked." We couldn't think of what to do. A mustached older man rolled up on his red motorcycle. "Lookin' fer a protest?" he inquired behind dark sunglasses. H mumbled no and the man revved off, perhaps in search of others "lookin' fer" RNC-related mischief. We decided to split the scene, go to a cafe, and reconvene. S and I only got as far as the cafe, Frenzy would meet up with me later afterwards to do some legitimate scout work around Sector 2ish with the Communications group. On foot we headed toward downtown, toward the sirens, toward the helicopters. Toward the police. Toward the mayhem. Toward the battle against the state, the corruption, the hypocrisy and teargas, the fences and retaliation, the horses and the dumpster barricades, the apathetic and active native Minnesotans. Toward the beauty of fighting for what we stand for.

I want to preface what I did and saw next by saying I really miss my bicycle, Priscilla. I can ride smoothly and swiftly and cover a lot of ground on that vintage 5-speed. Today I felt lame, my feet hardly moving, my legs making the pedaling motion they're so used to, but not succeeding in the way they're used to. Either way they learned to book it once we saw three cop cars heading west, or south, or east. We were continually on the move, from West Kellogg Blvd. to East 6th Street.

We even had a chance to rub elbows (literally) with Republican delegates. After walking a few blocks from the grocery store we spotted charter bus after charter bus filled with what we knew to be delegates. We crossed the street with them, smiled at them, and almost made it to the first checkpoint across the street from the Excel Center. We were mesmerized at the giant FoxNews screen that projected a foxy blonde anchor in a red dress reporting Republican rhetoric spun more than a salad mixer. Along our detour into the "battlefield" of downtown St. Paul, we met up with a Democrat who was very active in following us around to each action, if not just to observe the sheer number of cops present.

So there was the peace march that we slipped into. And there was the Anarchist Anti-Capitalist bloc we marched alongside. It was glorious and I almost forgot how badly my feet hurt until the hill we had to climb up to the Capitol building. Turns out we both needed rest. Then...

Enter The Crazy Anarchists! Staking out the Crowne Plaza on Kellogg where delegates were being bused out. There was

a sound system, a row of mobile riot cops, and, before long, horses. I felt sorry for the horses. Such a beautiful animal shouldn't be used to make a menacing figure more menacing. It's like associating butterflies with the plague.

So there were the horses. Then there were the full-on riot police, with shields. Whew! I did what I could to stay away from the frontline as I was not wearing black and had a very awkward tote bag to carry around. Nevertheless we remained with them as pepperspray shot through the air. A stream of Silly String quickly followed in pursuit. All the while I'm thinking, "So THAT'S what teargas feels like..." Frenzy, though not directly tear-gassed, felt its stinging effects carried through the strong wind as we were alongside the Mississippi River. Still we followed not too far behind the black bloc, and the cops.

The final showdown that brought our day to a close was the closing in and execution of a mass arrest attempt by the police. I myself nearly panicked. First they moved west. Then the National Guard moved in, weapons drawn. I remember hearing three shots -- there may have been more. I just wanted to run. I still only felt comfortable observing. I didn't want to be arrested today.

There were two parking lots separated by a street. Frenzy and I were walking east, I'm planning an escape route so we can book it if need be. I'm still consciously in "Activist Mode."



Where the road curves to the south, a line of mini-vans stop as if at a traffic light, and out of each minivan comes six to eight cops in full riot gear, bats drawn. The crowd disperses quickly. I begin to sprint. Frenzy screams, "STOP!" and I freeze. I watch as all the people with dental-floss applied patches are run down and thrown to the ground. Medics are not resisting arrest. I can't say what I would have done if that

had been me. You feel so brave until terror comes at you with zip-tie style handcuffs and a wooden bat. But I was still. I was silent. And I was dressed in pink and yellow. I think these three components made me invisible to the police force taking over St. Paul that day. There was a lady cop barking orders, stalking back and forth like an angry bull ready for the opportunity to charge a matador. She didn't so much as glance my way except to view what was beyond me -- protesters dressed the way protesters are supposed to be dressed. I wanted to punch her, she was attacking people I associated myself with and loved. When she looked in Frenzy's direction, he mustered out in a cracked voice, "Thanks for all your hard work." I wanted to punch him. Later he told me he said it out of fear, to make us appear as if we blended in more.

Once the crowd cleared except for those lying on the hot asphalt, Frenzy said with exhaustion, "I'm done for today. Let's go." I found myself speechless, both at the apparent failure illuminating Frenzy's words and the leftover scenery of the raid. People were up against a wall, hands up, their backs to the police. A plain-clothed citizen stood by as a medic and a protester had their faces in the asphalt, a cop approached with a pair of those zip-tie handcuffs. I regretfully turned my head the other way and began to our next task of finding a bus that would stop for us and deliver us back to Minneapolis.

Tunneling beneath PSYCHOLOGY

By I Steve

"Psychological First Aid for Activists: This training is designed to give people the tools they need to recognize the signs of emotional trauma immediately following a difficult experience, as well as the tools they need to provide immediate care and referrals. Some goals of the training are to provide practical help for immediate care, to legitimize the equal importance of psychological first aid to physical first aid, promote emotional resiliency in the activist community, and encourage peer support leading up to large events such as the RNC. The training covers defining stress and emotional trauma, signs and reactions to emotional trauma, how to address those reactions, active listening exercises, breathing exercises, & body awareness, red flags for more serious issues, and preventative care."

Occurring shortly after my arrival, this workshop is a sort of introduction to RNC reality for me. I am not like the other people here because I do not know why I am here. Most people are attending because they plan to staff the Wellness Center, where presumably, protesters who are traumatized by police violence will go to obtain help. Two men are part of a group that will staff a hotline for people to call when sexual assaults happen between converging activists, and as with the Wellness Center staff, this workshop is a mandatory part of their training. I do not know what I will do when the protests happen. It's like a rally where I won't hold a sign because I want to keep my hands free; I remain non-committed so I will be ready if something really needs doing and everyone else is busy. That said, it seems likely that someone will freak out and I will try to help them. Doesn't that happen a lot?

In most arenas of human struggle -- business, politics and war come to mind -- the psychological factors are thoroughly studied and analyzed. Why has activism been so much of an exception? Part of it is certainly our alienation from traditional systems of mental health and fitness. Many in our communities are survivors of psychiatric abuse. We see an academic mental health ideology being applied from the top down upon vulnerable people whose experiences are minimized.

In response, people throughout activist



culture have started to implement grass-roots personalist approaches to mental health. These include the global Icarus network, primarily for bipolar people, and many local collectives and informal self-help groups in a city near you. Participants in these projects were instrumental in developing the North Star Health Collective's psychological response plan in the Twin Cities. The workshop was part of this endeavor.

But there have been other obstacles to activist mental and emotional self-care. A direct action culture has overemphasized heroism and daring exploits -- fear, vulnerability to stress, and sometimes even

CHIC LANDSCAPE



second thoughts are perceived as embarrassing weaknesses. Also, in government and business, psychological programs are imposed upon reluctant peons in the name of productivity and effectiveness. In an anarchistic subculture this is obviously impossible.

I never do end up counseling anyone who is falling apart. But with my attention now drawn inward, my perception of the RNC protest situation is irrevocably altered. Is it Republican dark magic, or ingrained self-destruction in punk culture? Meeting any of my basic psychic needs is a hassle requiring persistence and assertiveness. The direct action plans publicly proposed are absurd. Are they all decoy actions or are the mysterious organizers in denial? In any case, I don't focus on winning anything; I just want to play my part well and am determined to understand what is going on in new ways. I force myself to eat at least two real meals a day and drink water.

"September 1, 2008, we, the RNC Welcoming Committee, invite all anarchists and anti-authoritarians, all radicals and rabble-rousers, all those who are fed up with

I think people who want to do something dangerous & stupid should be calm and grounded so they can do it as intelligently and safely as possible

government lies and spectacles to show up ready for action and ensure that we leave no place for these expired politicians. What we create here will send the convention crashing off into insignificance."

"To someone who has never experienced danger, the idea is attractive rather than alarming." - Carl Von Clausewitz, On War

I meet some people who have come hundreds of miles to do an action together. They want to be a part of the big plan. They are exhausted from affinity group meetings, cluster meetings, and colossal, long, spokes-councils. For days they have little contact with anyone who is not an anti-authoritarian focused on some decisive activity, and this is their whole experience of Minnesota.

They are tense and cranky. I remember the psychological workshop; I think people who want to do something dangerous and stupid should be calm and grounded so they can do it as intelligently and safely as possible.

A grand variety of projects were under way, organized autonomously from the Welcoming Committee, which rented the Convergence Space. The Welcoming Committee's bicycle project spun-off as a distinct entity of sorts, building literally hundreds of bicycles to keep out of town activists functional and mobile during their stay. The venerable Seeds of Peace provided food for the massive permitted peace march of 10-40 thousand people (yes, the variation of crowd estimates is unusual), as

well as most events over the week of convention related activity.

The North Star Health Collective and Cold Snap Legal Collective were organized locally and independently of the Welcoming Committee. An unprecedented number of people underwent a three day intensive medical training. When the protests finally happened medical resources were constantly available even in the most intense situations.

Most radicals who live in the Twin Cities and most radicals from out of town are on different planets now. See, most people, even most freaks, don't care about the RNC. So most people stay home, but the smaller number of



people who do come here think the whole thing is a great idea and they wouldn't miss it for the world. The people who live here don't have as much choice about being here and having to perhaps reluctantly deal with the whole thing, but also have options unavailable to outsiders (whether they come or not).

There seems to be a curious mood of harm reduction: militant protesting is like heroin or speed or something, and while we're all going to be good anarchists and not tell people not to do things, we can also meet with the personal devastation one-on-one and let people know there might be better life-paths. Oh, but are we enabling?

Whatever, fuck that guilt trip. But what does seem to really be happening... is this polarity between anarchy as stereo-typical black bloc chaos, and ultralawfully marching in obedience to a permit (no dis on either intended), without inclusion of the universe of actions in between. Is it fueled by our withdrawal?

"I can't help thinking of Grand Theft Auto IV — you hear the copter, you know you're doing well." - Christopher Beam in Slate.com

Simultaneously with the huge peace march, there were breakaway marches and makeshift roadblocks scattered throughout downtown. Some people fucked shit up. The destruction was far from massive and not the focus of the actions: some windows, a couple cop cars, a delegate bus got pelted.

I would write an article about such a demo but there is already an article that I like better than the one I would write because the author is mainstream and tries to be non-judgmental (which is funny): www.slate.com/id/2199060/

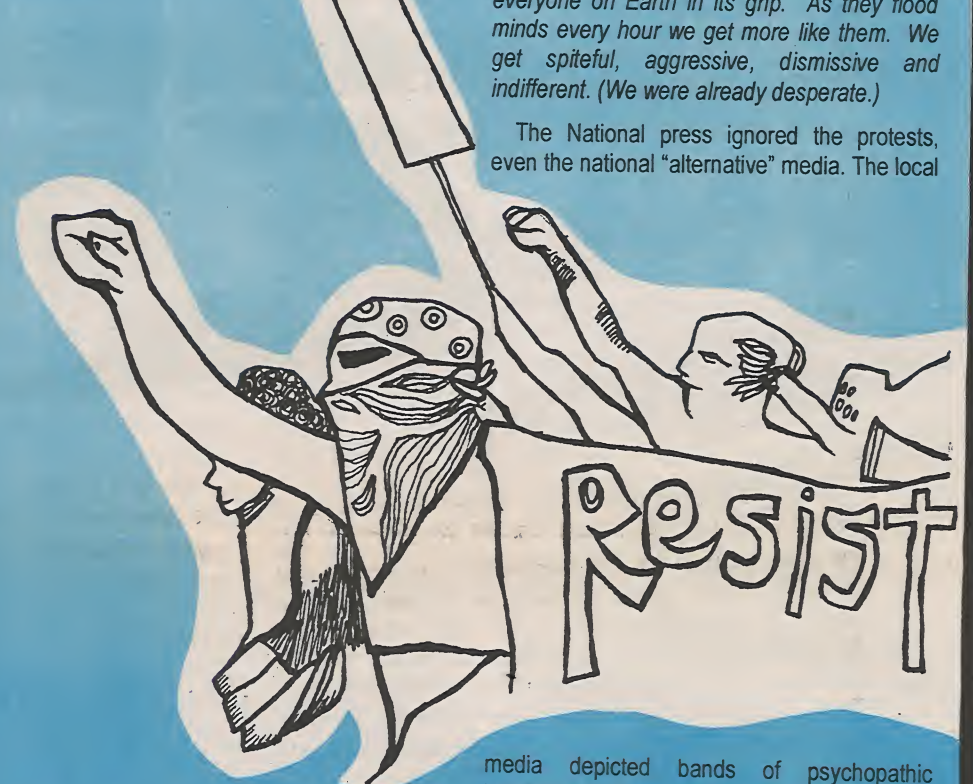
Someone who is working on getting people out of jail tells me statistics. They say there were an enormous number of people arrested Monday who are from out of town and under 25. The first info-bit is not surprising. Saint



Paul civic leaders had called out far and wide that downtown Saint Paul was the happening place right now. But the youth aspect troubles many people.

While I might share this feeling later, as the protest unfolds I am inspired. The youth are swift and brave and an equal number of police cannot contain them at first. In the face of police attacks they grow bolder. They stay as long as they can, even when swelling police ranks make mass arrests inevitable.

The police presence is intense and severe throughout the convention. This had been telegraphed by the police attack on Critical Mass exactly one year before. And now they begin with preemptive raids on the Convergence space and homes or crash spots of alleged key people the weekend before the convention.



About 3500 police and 200 Minnesota National Guard were on convention duty Monday the first. While they get a B+ for their research and reconnaissance the police response on the street was clumsy and uninspired. And they made up for their shortcomings with arbitrary brutality. Over four days of the convention, police consistently attacked peaceful demonstrators with a variety of special weapons, even though there was sabotage and disruption only on the afternoon of the first. This culminated on Thursday as McCain rose to speak — a permitted march

there seems to be a curious mood of harm reduction: militant protesting is like heroin or speed or something

had its permit revoked by surprise and almost 400 were arrested for a now "unlawful" assembly, while corralled people were sprayed and gassed for no apparent reason.

Even away from the protests the reality of mass police action dominated the cores of the Twin Cities this week. The daily newspapers reported the police brass boast that they "didn't take the bait." Like much in the corporate-imperialist press regarding sensitive matters, this is the precise opposite of the truth. Everywhere felt like occupied Baghdad. More so than either the militant or the obedient protesters, the police did an wonderful job of showing the Twin Cities that you really can't keep the war over there.

A thousand police can be a thousand times as intense as one police. You try to go to

sleep and they're still parading around in your mind. Police, police, police everywhere. How many people were how injured by the police on what day? And they're snatching people on quiet residential streets and in far flung exurbs in their pursuit of "rioters."

Every house has a sign by the door explaining what to do if the police come, do they have a warrant? You have the right to remain silent (so shut up already, keep it to yourself). In RNC week everyone, especially if you look funny, has to expect and have the energy for a harsh encounter at any time, and keep the strength for refusal in reserve.

This is the world each police lives in, they wake up and go to work and there's a zillion other police. Every second they have to know who to obey and who to command in a web of police culture that encompasses almost everyone on Earth in its grip. As they flood minds every hour we get more like them. We get spiteful, aggressive, dismissive and indifferent. (We were already desperate.)

The National press ignored the protests, even the national "alternative" media. The local

media depicted bands of psychopathic "anarchists" bent on mindless destruction. Hurling urine at people and kidnapping delegates are portrayed as standard "anarchist" tactics. The weekly artsy paper said the best defense against anarchists was "a healthy childhood."

Even if the discontent was exaggerated and fanned by the corporate press, it was still very real that large numbers of people felt genuine disgust at the "anarchist" activities.

I ride in the back of the metro bus to Minneapolis. Everyone is talking about the protests unless they actually are protesters in which case they're ready to change the subject. Men of color express annoyance with the police over the disruption of bus service, and opine that the police had provoked the young dissidents into recklessness, and at least some of the window breaking on Fox News was staged. I imagine that a less oppressed group of people might have a less charitable view of us.

The convention is over and the Republicans appear to be unscathed. McCain and Palin go off to rule the world in a real life *Handmaid's Tale* with endless war in the biblical lands. But in Minnesota the police state is exhausted, and as confused about who was arrested as we are. The heat is off and people breath easy as the aftermath sets in.

In the secret Anarchist tavern in Eagan, I can't peacefully sip my port while writing down strange dreams because there are so many college students and crusties excitedly telling thrilling protest stories. Despite the felony charges, the lasting burns of tasers or unusually concentrated pepper spray, and the mass adrenal exhaustion, hundreds of people are wiser and stronger, ready to come back into downtown America, do it better and stop all their wars.

Pompous Police Presence Pervades Protests

By Paul Bloom

I was outside the Democratic National Convention for the four days of its life in Denver, CO. The heavily armed, massive police presence in Denver was daunting even to convention delegates. Police on horseback, police on motorcycles, and SUVs rolling down the street with three or four helmeted police on both side running boards and on the rear bumper, squadrons of cops leaning against buildings, lurking in alleys, and poised on street corners suited in protective gear reminiscent of Star Wars, armed with gas guns, tasers, shotguns, semi-automatics, and who-knows-what gadgetry; Denver police and sheriffs, police from other jurisdictions (one afternoon I found my way blocked by mounted police from Cheyenne, Wyoming), dozens of federal police agencies and countless armed private security guards were ubiquitous.

One evening I was walking down the street past a federal courthouse talking into a cell phone when a guy pulled up and jumped out of his car to take a picture of a church across the street. Immediately, a couple of armed security guards ran out of the building and grabbed his camera. "Hey, that's a nice church, make a nice picture," I volunteered. "Just keep moving!" was the reply. "I'm not in your way," I rejoined. "This is federal property, just keep moving!" I was on the city sidewalk.

Still conversing on the cell phone, describing to my friend what was happening, I moved to a bus bench at the end of the block and watched as more guards and police emerged from the courthouse. One of them (Federal Protective Police) came over to me and demanded ID. As I handed it to him I asked "What's the problem?" "You were interfering with the officers." "No, I wasn't in their way at all." "What have you been smoking?" "I don't smoke." "Put that cell phone down when I'm talking to you." "I'll just keep it on, thanks." Wham! He grabbed the phone and shut it, and put me in handcuffs. "For your protection and mine."

Ten minutes later, after ID checks had run their course, he let me go. This was not an uncommon experience --- in the days following I heard countless similar tales.

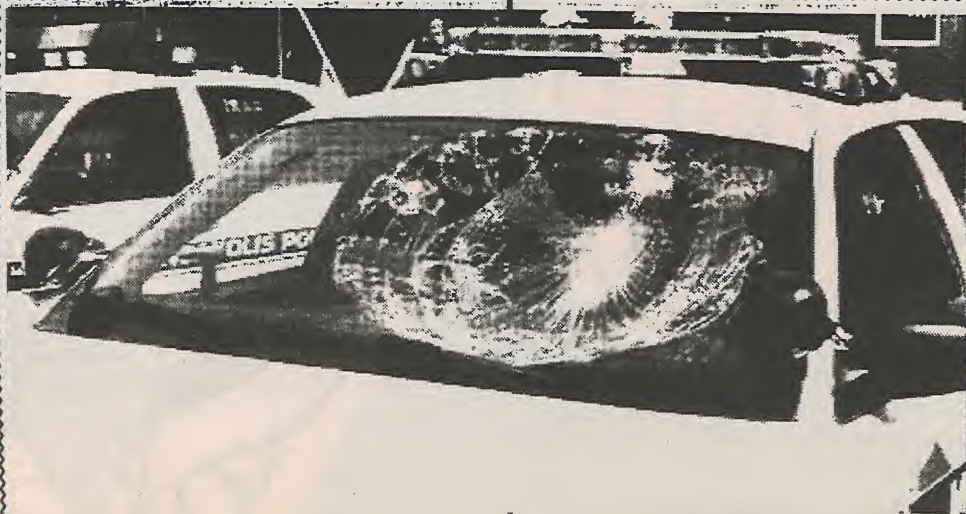
Unlike Chicago '68, where a peace plank had been introduced on the floor, and where Connecticut Senator Ribicoff in his nominating speech for George McGovern denounced the "Gestapo tactics" of Mayor Daley and the Chicago police, there was a great disconnect between the official Democratic Party convention agenda and protesters. Denver Mayor Hickenlooper, a Democrat, did everything he could to isolate demonstrations and make protesters invisible. Only as a result of the Iraq Veterans Against the War march was a bridge put in place between street demonstrations and the party inside.

Prior to the opening of the convention, a federal judge had ruled that security needs outweighed First Amendment considerations, and affirmed the city's right to restrict protesters to a fenced-in area out of sight of convention attendees. The Free Speech Zone, which actually appears as such on official maps, consisted of a 50,000 square foot parking lot surrounded by a 10 foot high chain link fence and an inner rail iron fence, with no bathroom or porta-potties.

Addressing a rally Sunday prior to the convention, Ron Kovic pledged: "I gave three-fourths of my body in Vietnam and I'm not going to be put into a cage in silence."

No demonstrations took place in the Free Speech Zone.

However, in a park far from downtown and the Pepsi (convention) Center, the mayor had permitted organizers to place tents and hold support activities but forbidden them to sleep. There a national group called Tent State University facilitated much of the organizing, including logistics for Wednesday's IAWA-sponsored Rage Against the Machine concert at the Coliseum, and including Resurrection City Free University, a 4-day series of more than 40 colloquiums on the park lawn with presenters such as Vincent Harding, politician Cynthia McKinney, writer Vincent Bugliosi, and Professor Stephen Zunes.



Because they were forbidden to camp at Tent State, at the end of long, hot days 30 or 40 people trekked to what they called the Freedom Cage to sleep. No fires were permitted, amended to "no heat sources" after someone tried to cook breakfast on a battery-powered hot plate. Campers had to walk three or four blocks to bathrooms, harassed at police blockades coming and going. Stadium lights were kept on at all times and, as people started to retire, giant floodlights were turned on for the remainder of the night. Police in cherrypickers kept an all-night vigil over the 30 or 40 campers who woke each morning to find themselves surrounded on the ground by Secret Service among others.



Rambunctious Rectify REPUBLICAN REALITY

By Frenzy

I write on the finale of the Republican National Convention, sitting in a house not my own, not more than 15 miles from police repression and violence. I sit pondering my role in all of this, in the world I want to create, and I'm not sure what that is.

I decided to go to the RNC earlier this year in hopes of participating in the largest gathering since the WTO in 1999. I used my "Economic Stimulus Package" to fly out here. As months went by I participated in meetings and invited the Welcoming Committee to The Long Haul. This would be my first large

"The street fighting that goes on now is preemptive and always when the power expects it."

This event started a personal dialog that lasted for 3 days. The actions of the protesters created a spectacle, but barely reached media due to the impending hurricane and Sarah Palin's pregnant daughter. This begs the question, what does mobilizing at these events do? I left my community when it needed me the most to participate in this spectacle. I know not of one delegate bus that was permanently stopped that first day and that the delegate entrances were so relaxed, I walked right up to the gate and rubbed elbows with delegates, wearing an American flag hat, of course. If the Welcoming Committee's task was to stop the convention, they failed. What the Welcoming Committee did do was revive the Anarchist movement and with this new energy, we must ask ourselves:

Should we spend energy attacking the structures of power, or should we build a world we want to live in and then fight to protect it?

It seems that the main focus of this mobilization was to attack the Republicans for all of their shit. This, however, resulted in building of infrastructure that needs to stay in place such as:

- * A free Bike Shop
- * Two free meals a day
- * Housing for those who needed it, and
- * A general location for radicals to meet and mingle

protest, as the ones I had been to before were anti-war types in San Francisco and local issue things. I over-prepared with goggles, respirators, gloves and other items that seem silly now. Two days before I was supposed to leave, the Long Haul Infoshop was raided, which put me in a state of paranoia and worry.

Once in the Twin Cities the theme of raids followed with the convergence space being raided on Friday and houses of the 8 main organizers over the weekend, resulting in their arrests. Later we learned that they were being watched the whole time by the police, every word they said taken seriously. Monday morning held promises of the convention being crashed by Hurricane Gustav -- we finally had Mother Nature on our side!

The first day held elaborate plans, most of which failed. Those were foiled by the police joined the march down town with "funk the war" which was half dance party, half riot. We breathed tear gas, dragged stuff into the street and enjoyed the fear of the crowd. I dressed extremely conservatively, in polo shirt and khakis, which was the smartest thing I had ever done. As a group of black bloc around me were all thrown to the ground I was invisible to the police. The would not look at me because I was not a perceived trouble maker. I witnessed a woman -- a medic -- thrown to the ground, and this changed things for me.

It makes me sad that some of these projects will disappear after the RNC is over. This shows we can all be united by a common enemy, but why must this be temporary? The common enemy is everywhere -- all the time!

The Anarchist community is very good at organizing against things but not very good and organizing FOR things. I would like to see a national movement of people challenging the structures of power with their own projects and then fighting to protect them. The street fighting that goes on now is preemptive and always when the power expects it.

Tonight more people will go to jail, the police will torture them, and the RNC will go on as planned, nominating John McCain as their president. Most importantly, 8 people will have the hardest year of their lives for being idealistic and thinking they could change things. It will be a long trial with insane justifications.

Let's come strong out of this one and remember we must have LOVE OVER FEAR!

Let's bring back to our communities the passion from the RNC and build something more. The revolution is now and it's not going to be in the streets: it's going to be in our communities.

"Anarchy We Can Believe In!"

Reflections on The DNC protests

By Unconventional Denver

When it was first announced that Denver would be hosting the 2008 Democratic National Convention, there were a lot of different responses, but the vast majority amongst the radical left was that of fear and cynicism. People reacted everywhere from vowing to leave the city during convention week to taking a damage control stance, making the argument that "it's better that we try to shape how this will affect us than the state or other activists we might disagree with." There was very little local excitement or enthusiasm in organizing around the DNC.

Compare that to the sentiment amongst many anarchists on a national level. In what was probably some of the earliest and most thoughtful dialog around convention protests, the anarchist/anti-authoritarian network Unconventional Action (UA) emerged. The attitudes of those who initiated the UA network stood in stark contrast to many in Denver. Instead of a fear or dread of the negative impact the protests would have on local projects and the straining of resources, UA folks were preparing eagerly for the event, seeing it instead as an important springboard to a revival of anti-capitalist resistance and diversity of tactics at mass mobilizations.

In between this strange tension of outside enthusiasm and inside naysaying grew Unconventional Denver, an appropriate blend of the two. Admittedly, the group really was born of the more hopefully cynicism of Denver—the hope that by participating in the planning process, that we might be able to frame the protests in a less fucked up way than past events have been, maybe even creating some inspiration.

Organizing Amongst a Divided Left

Most major cities have a strong dose of bitterness, burned bridges and sectarianism. Denver is no different. Some had hoped that the DNC might serve as an impetus to band together. Unfortunately, it seems the opposite happened. In the middle of the disagreements, Unconventional Denver stood-caught between groups that had falling outs. We certainly had our own share of slip ups, miscommunications and thoughtlessness. In the end though, we were able to stay out of a lot of the politics and stay focused on our goals for the protests. I would attribute a lot of this to our points of unity: our respect for a diversity of tactics and emphasis on working in a horizontal fashion. Working in a non-hierarchical structure was a great way to show anarchism in action.

The DNC as a Failure Anarchists Talk Big...Again

When Unconventional Denver first started, there was a lot of talk about doing a mobilization right and learning from our mistakes. Somewhere between then and the conventions we got lazy, fell back on the familiar, and recreated some of the exact mistakes we vowed to avoid. I remember at the first few consults folks were saying that,

- it was better to have an achievable goal we accomplished than call for something vague and grandiose that would fall short
- our actions should speak for themselves
- when you take a snapshot of us in the streets people will know exactly what we are fighting for
- we use the power of satire and humor in a respectful, but effective way against the Democrats
- we recognize the role the DNC plays in the furthering gentrification and racist development of Denver and work with those most affected by those forces to effectively fight its march onward.

One of our biggest faults was that, after our first national consulta, we decided that we would come up with goals for the DNC that would inform our strategy. When making goals, the number one rule is to keep the goals

to around three and that those goals be measurable in some way. Doing this helps focus the group and makes them meaningful, something that can be constantly looked at to assess the work we're doing. We essentially did the opposite—coming up with fourteen goals! Many of them were unrealistic and difficult to measure. Here they all are—

- shut down, disrupt, or delay the convention
- storm convention events
- dismantle Denver's capitalism, gentrification, and eco-devastation networks
- feel our movement's power as a confrontational force
- make direct action a threat again
- bring our international anarchist movement back into the public consciousness
- build momentum for the opposition to the RNC
- ensure that the DNC is a thing of rowdy beauty
- turn the DNC's festivities into our own
- bring the direct action that meets the needs

For a group as small as we were, we fucking rocked it

of local communities

- continue multiracial coalitions with multiracial turnouts
- stop racist development and the targeting of immigrant communities
- further Denver anarchist community's ties with other local struggles

one will ever want to leave. ever.

So looking back, many of the goals were unrealistic, but even the goals we set which we might have achieved, such as turning the DNC into a thing of "rowdy beauty" isn't very helpful in guiding us towards whether or not the work we did was a success. Had we come up with two or three very solid goals it would have helped us tremendously in terms of prioritizing when our small, overextended group repeatedly tried to take everything on, oftentimes forcing us to abandon efforts or scale them back significantly.

Radical Shouldn't Mean Irrelevant

Radical politics should strike a chord with those who experience the violence of the state and capitalism in the most acute ways. The Democratic National Convention was an event that fit perfectly into the City of Denver's continual racist and classist development. The changing face of Denver is one that is very insidious. Mayor Hickenlooper, a liberal Democrat, is a down to earth, feel-good guy

neighborhoods of color with aggressive "Broken Windows" policing. As Denver touts its initiative for the homeless, the city ups its harassment of people in Civic Center Park and declares that all free food programs need to be moved inside and out of sight.

The Democratic National Convention was exactly the type of major event needed to continue pushing forward a progressive image while simultaneously securing extra funding and equipment to forcibly maintain the inequities of capitalism. The push to move the food distribution programs inside had been on the table for years, but suddenly it found extra funding and urgency to make it happen in time for the DNC. The Democratic National Convention also supported the push for posh retail outlets and high end restaurants at the expense of local, long time businesses. The City continued pouring in money to redeveloped areas of downtown while a housing crisis displaces communities that have been together for generations.

What would the DNC protests have looked like if Unconventional Denver and other protest groups used this analysis to guide organizing? The sad part is that we had this analysis early

on. We even had it buried in the long list of goals. Again, had we been more purposeful in our intent maybe we would have ensured that we spend the time to educate ourselves on these issues and ask those struggling against police brutality and gentrification, how the DNC protests could aid their work and where we could work in coalition with one another. Instead, with vague aspirations of making direct action a threat again, we settled into white privilege and the familiar, to neglect real coalition building.

So the cynics were right. We didn't disrupt the functionings of the DNC, our messaging was at times unclear, the protests lacked broad diverse participation and both our major days of action—disrupting the fundraisers and blockading the convention—were completely called off. Once again, we anarchists talked big and failed to follow through.

The DNC as a Success

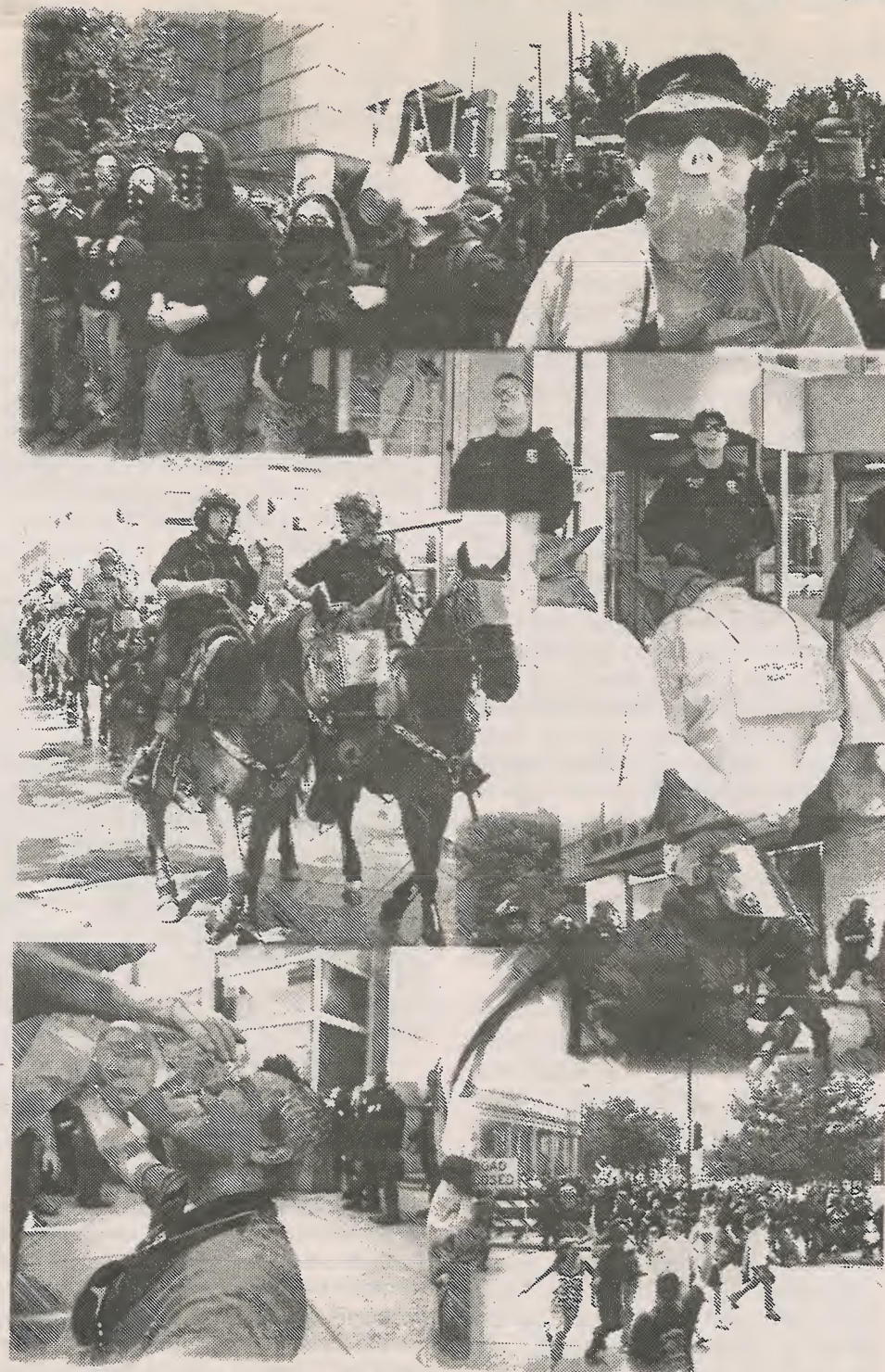
But the cynics were also wrong, and probably wrong on the most important level. The Democratic National Convention is a symbolic event. Unlike a free trade agreement meeting where actual decisions must be made, in which direct action can actually affect those outcomes, the DNC was completely scripted. We knew who would be elected and even shutting the convention down completely would not prevent the two-party system from moving forward.

The primary point of organizing for the conventions was to revive the diversity of tactics model and make anti-capitalism relevant again. We wanted to leave a new generation of activists with a sense of the power that comes from organizing to make change ourselves instead of electing leaders. We wanted to highlight the brutality of the state and the beauty of resistance. In this sense, we won and we won big.

Dynamite Comes in Small Packages

For a group as small as we were, we fucking rocked it. Despite being one of the smallest DNC protest groups our productivity was impressive. As a result, anarchists and anarchist messages were prominent throughout the week: the Reclaim the Streets event; the anti-capitalist march, the green and black bloc and the key roles anarchists played in the Iraq Veterans Against the War march.

I'd much rather have a deeply flawed mobilization spark a renewed enthusiasm for resistance, than one which saps resources or ends as soon as the police leave the streets of a city to continue its occupation of neighborhoods. I know that the DNC imbibed a new sense of hope amongst myself and many other anarchists and radicals. Let's take that energy forward.



• have such a good time and create something so magnificently awesome that no

class residents. While the Denver Art Museum opens its doors, police are targeting



...longhaul raid continued

Long Haul Infoshop

regroups after

police raid



Continued from Page 1

Long Haul is a non-profit corporation that operates a community center, library and historical archive at 3124 Shattuck Avenue. It hosts the Long Haul Infoshop as well as the *Slingshot* collective and East Bay Food Not Bombs and provides space for various community activities ranging from a needle exchange to Pilates to the People to East Bay Prisoner Support. Long Haul features a free, public access computer room so folks can use the internet — before the raid it featured 8 computers that were used by hundreds of people.

The police raid's official goal was to seize those public computers and records of who might have been using them. Although the search warrant implies the cops were interested in public access computers, police ended up seizing all computers in the building including *Slingshot* and East Bay Prisoner Support computers that were not available to the public, but that shared a common dsl line.

Search warrant or blank check?

Police got a court order sealing the application for the search warrant from public view. Luckily, Long Haul got a copy of it anyway after a confused court clerk in-training released it to an ABC tv reporter. The statement of probable cause submitted by UCPD officer Kasiske to obtain the warrant shows that he thought the threatening emails were sent from a public computer at Long Haul. The police obtained records from Long Haul's ISP as well as Google tracing emails sent from gmail accounts accessed through the Long Haul dsl line. The warrant application discusses recent home demonstrations at UC Berkeley and implies that they may be linked with two firebombings against animal researchers in Santa Cruz on August 2. The application also mentions the Animal Liberation Front.

Kasiske wrote that: "I learned that at the time the harassing email messages were sent . . . the subscribers address was 3124 Shattuck Avenue in Berkeley. I recognized this address as belonging to the Long Haul Infoshop. I know that the Long Haul is a resource and meeting center for radical activists. I know that animal rights activists have held meetings at the Long Haul. The

on to state: "I know establishments that offer public computer access often have some type of system for patrons to sign in or register to use the computers. A search of the Long Haul's premises could reveal logs or sign-in sheets indicating which patrons used the computers on particular dates. This information would aid in identifying the suspect who sent the threatening email messages using the Long Haul's computers. It is likely that the suspect who sent the threatening email messages used the computers for other purposes as well. A search of the computers at the Long Haul could reveal information the suspect stores on the computers, websites the suspect accessed, or other email accounts the suspect used. This information would aid in identifying the suspect. Due to the complexity of searching computer systems and the need to properly maintain evidence stored on computer systems, a detailed search would need to be conducted off-site by a computer forensics specialist."

The police uncertainty about whether Long Haul might have maintained records of who used its computers is interesting. Long Haul — like the public library — does not maintain



such records precisely to protect computer users from government snooping. (Also, in Long Haul's case, it is due to disorganization and lack of resources.) The search warrant application makes clear that police are familiar with Long Haul's role in the community and its operations as a radical space. It is unclear what surveillance they may have carried out prior to the raid. If they had sent even a single undercover officer to ask to use a computer prior to the raid, it would have been clear to the police that no records are kept and that volunteers staffing Long Haul cannot see the door of the computer room to know who goes in and out. If it eventually turns out police knew this full well, their real reason for seeking

a search warrant against Long Haul will be transparent: harassment not law enforcement.

The judge issued a warrant permitting a search for: "Any written, typed, or electronically stored documents, papers, notebooks, or logs containing names or other identifying information of patrons who used the computers at the Long Haul Infoshop." The warrant also covered "All electronic data processing and storage devices, computers and computer systems including, but not limited to, central processing units, external hard drives, CDs, DVDs, diskettes, memory cards, PDAs, and USB flash drives."

The search warrant application continued: "Search of all of the above items is for files, data, images, software, operating systems, deleted files, altered files, system configurations, drive and disk configurations, date and time, and unallocated and slack space, for evidence. With respect to computer systems and any items listed above, the Peace Officers are authorized to transfer the booked evidence to a secondary location prior to commencing the search of the items. Furthermore, said search may continue beyond the ten-day period beginning upon issuance of this Search Warrant, to the extent necessary to complete the search on the computer systems and any items listed above."

The raid at Long Haul was followed only days later by raids in Minneapolis/St. Paul against activists involved in Republican National Conventions there. The search warrant application in that case makes it clear that RNC Welcoming Committee activists were under constant surveillance and infiltration for a year. It is worth noting that Unconventional Action Bay Area held a spokes council meeting about the RNC at Long Haul only days before the raid. Moreover, Long Haul has served as a base for various radical activists in the East Bay for decades. Long Haul was founded in 1979 and the Infoshop project celebrated its 15th birthday in August. It all raises the question of whether the raid was just about threatening emails, or whether it was part of a larger intelligence gathering operation against radicals.

Long Haul has a posse

In the wake of the raid, Long Haul has been flooded with messages of support and donations from as far away as Tasmania. In particular, numerous individuals donated computers to replace the ones seized in the raid. A benefit concert the night after the raid was mobbed by supporters and raised hundreds of dollars. Activists around the country have stepped up to organize benefits and protests for Long Haul. The outpouring of support has been humbling — it is no joke to

say that there is a radical community that has your back when you need it.

Several dozen lawyers volunteered to help Long Haul respond to the raid, including excellent activist lawyers from the National Lawyers Guild and heavy hitters from the Electronic Frontier Foundation and the American Civil Liberties Union. As anarchist-oriented folks who are skeptical of bourgeois, mainstream legal solutions to problems, the Long Haul crew had a great discussion of the merits of using the court system to defend Long Haul against the police raid. The real anarchist, direct action response to a police raid is to keep Long Haul open and not let the police distract us from our mission of changing society, building community, fighting capitalism, struggling for people over profit, and defending the earth. Having said that, bourgeois legal action — along with protests and media action — is a tool open to Long



Haul. Generally, Long Haulers want to do what we can so this kind of raid doesn't happen to any other infoshops in the future. That means we want to expose the flimsy grounds for the raid and make the raid as expensive, embarrassing and inconvenient for the police as possible.

Big Brother is Watching

By seizing the public access computers, the FBI got access to hundreds of individual people's personal information that may have been left on the public computers. No one knows what people left on those computers or what the FBI forensics experts might be able to recover. Even when you hit the "delete" button on a computer, your work is left on hard disk

drives. Long Haul had no security measures on its public access computers (or *Slingshot* computers) prior to the raid. However, in the aftermath, Long Haul computer experts are figuring out ways to make the computers more secure, even though total security is impossible. One idea has been hard disk encryption. Another idea is to remove hard drives entirely from the public access computers and load an open-source operating system each time they are turned on. That way, all information would disappear each time they are turned off.

In general, it appears that the police did not get crucial Long Haul or *Slingshot* information during the raid. Some *Slingshot* articles written for this issue were seized and since they were not backed up, had to be rewritten. It was sheer luck that we weren't right in the middle of making the Organizer or this issue — if that had been the case, the raid could have set *Slingshot* collective back weeks. Some unbacked up internal *Slingshot* collective files were also lost. It does not appear that the police got a copy of the *Slingshot* mailing list



(for sending out papers) or other sensitive Long Haul data. Most of that information was kept at another location on different computers. This arrangement was partly for ease of access — the *Slingshot* mailing operation does not run out of Long Haul — and partly out of security concerns at Long Haul. Prior to the police raid, Long Haul has been subject to half a dozen burglaries of uncertain origin.

We now know how easily the police can track an email to a physical location. It seems reasonable to assume that if that location is an infoshop or other radical space, the chance of having computers seized is higher than if an email is traced to a public library.

The real danger may still be on the horizon. In the search warrant application, it is clear that the police are investigating recent animal rights protests and are looking for links between legal, public protests and recent firebombings against animal researchers in Santa Cruz and Los Angeles. The weekend after the raid, the National Lawyers Guild conducted a Know Your Rights workshop at Long Haul to review how folks can react if the police make further raids, seek to interview Long Haul users, make arrests, or seek to subpoena anyone before a Grand Jury. Under these circumstances, folks need to avoid paranoia and being paralyzed from taking any action, while being extra sensitive and careful.

It is hard to measure the overall sense of tension, anxiety and trauma coming out of the police raid. Having your home base invaded by police is ugly, scary and brutal. It is hard to prepare for such a violation and it is hard to pick up the pieces afterwards. Long Haul volunteers are slowly sharing their emotions and I can say for myself that I feel a keen need to be around my comrades and share support with them in this time of stress. It has been great to make this issue of the paper during this time since it gives us endless opportunities to share community. That helps break the isolation and fear.

The raid and its aftermath have been stressful yet in the end, Long Haul is in it for the long haul and the struggle continues. The police sought to disrupt us and scare us off, but we're coming out stronger and more determined than ever.



Long Haul's website advertises that they offer a computer room with four computers for 'activist oriented access.'

Kasiske's search warrant application lists six allegedly threatening email messages sent from the Long Haul dsl line in June. Given that the purportedly illegal threatening emails were sent from a public computer in June and that the raid was in August — with hundreds of people visiting Long Haul during that time — one might think that trying to find a particular person who sent six emails would be like looking for a needle in a haystack. Was the police's real purpose to find a suspect, or to disrupt a known radical community center and conduct a fishing expedition of computer information from hundreds of people who used Long Haul computers unrelated to any threatening emails?

Kasiske's search warrant application went

Michael Rossman 1939 – 2008

Compiled by PB Floyd

Michael Rossman, a Berkeley-based radical who spent his life struggling for a new world, died May 12 at his home surrounded by friends and family. He was 68. Rossman was a red-diaper baby who became active in UC Berkeley's first radical political party, Slate, in the late 1950s. He is best known for his participation in the 1964 Free Speech Movement during which he was part of the leadership along with Mario Savio, Suzanne Goldberg, Jack Weinberg and others. He spent nine weeks in jail as a result of his involvement in the FSM. He wrote a number of books including "The Wedding Within the War" (1971) which described his experiences in the counter-culture. He has some of the best lines in the documentary film "Berkeley in the 60s."

By the time the *Slingshot* crew met Michael, he was archiving political posters and he helped us clean out numerous historical items from our offices at the Long Haul. He never set out to be an archivist but by steadily compiling since the 60's he had acquired the largest known collection of posters by a single individual. Michael never gave up on the radical movement. He organized conferences that would reunite FSM participants and friends. He was a supporter of People's Park and he spoke out for the Memorial Oak Grove. A renaissance man, he was filled with energy and had many interests and talents aside from

activism. He was a poet from early on and loved music, art and math. He taught primary school math for 30 years and helped run Camp Chrysalis, a summer program that took children to state parks around Northern California, for 25 years. His home in Berkeley was filled with not only books and posters but also exotic plants that would spill from their pots and blur the line with the overgrown plants outside his window. His front door was often left open.

In 1969, he celebrated a three-day hippie marriage celebration with Karen McLellan who he had met at UC Berkeley in 1963. They finally got legally married only months ago. Rossman is survived by McLellan as well as their two sons and a granddaughter.



Utah Phillips 1935-2008

Radical folk singer-songwriter Utah Phillips, a key figure in the revival of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW/Wobblies) over the last few decades, died May 23rd at his home in Nevada City, Calif. He was 73.

Utah was the son of labor organizers in Ohio. He served as an Army private during the Korean War, an experience he would later refer to as the turning point of his life. Deeply affected by the devastation and human misery he witnessed, upon his return to the United States he began drifting, riding freight trains around the country. His struggle would be familiar today, when the difficulties of returning combat veterans are more widely understood, but in the late fifties Phillips was left to work them out for himself. Destitute and drinking, Phillips got off a freight train in Salt Lake City and wound up at the Joe Hill House, a homeless shelter operated by the anarchist Ammon Hennacy, a member of the Catholic Worker movement and associate of Dorothy Day.

Phillips credited Hennacy and other social reformers he referred to as his elders with having provided a philosophical framework around which he later constructed songs and stories he intended as a template his audiences could employ to understand their own political and working lives. They were often hilarious, sometimes sad, but never shallow.

A stint as an archivist for the State of Utah in the 1960s taught Phillips the discipline of historical research. Beneath the simplest and most folksy of his songs was a rigorous attention to detail and a strong and carefully-crafted narrative structure.

A single from Phillips's first record, "Moose Turd Pie," a rollicking story about working on a railroad track gang, saw extensive airplay in 1973. From then on, Phillips had work as a folk singer on the road.

When illness limited his touring in 2004, he returned to his roots at the Joe Hill House by founding Hospitality House, a homeless shelter in his rural home county where down-on-their-luck men and women were sleeping under the manzanita brush at the edge of town. It houses 25 to 30 guests a night. His family requests memorial donations to Hospitality House, P.O. Box 3223, Grass Valley, California 95945 (530) 271-7144 www.hospitalityhousesshelter.org



Nowtopia: How Pirate Programmers, Outlaw Bicyclists, and Vacant-Lot Gardeners are Inventing the Future Today

\$18.00, AK Press 2008

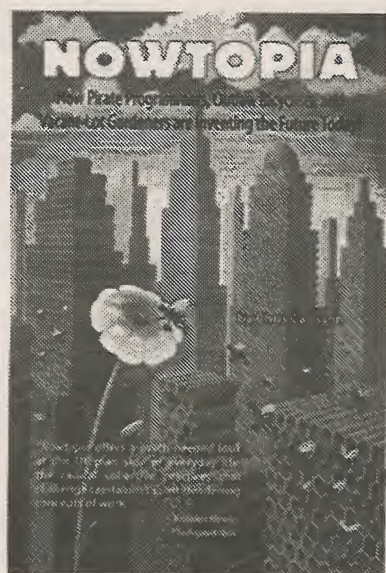
By Cris Carlsson

Review by James Generic

"Nowtopia: How Pirate Programmers, Outlaw Bicyclists, and Vacant-Lot Gardeners Are Inventing the Future Today!" explores the subcultures of subtle and active resistance to the dominate US consumer culture. Author Chris Carlsson argues that today, the American working class is not able to organize through traditional union politics, since people work in jobs where they move around a lot or are more individualized in smaller units, like smaller shops or service jobs, with many different locations, as opposed to the factory setting of the 20th century. He says that active resistance focuses on creating a "nowtopia" approach rather than a far off future utopia. He touches on a variety of people in the US engaged in building this new world today, instead of confronting the old existing capitalist world order. Examples he gives include the DIY ethic, urban gardeners, bicyclist, hackers and internet freaks, the Burning Man, left-wing scientists, and free fuel activists.

Urban gardeners reclaim otherwise decaying urban cities, where drugs and crime plague neighborhoods, and try to get food from the land. The gardens take back private

property, long abandoned by slum lords, and turn it into public land or a commons for the neighbors and by the neighbors, growing and sharing food. More often than not, women lead in rebuilding a sense of community by putting



in gardens and caring for them. Green Philadelphia, a network promoting urban gardens in Philadelphia areas taken over by drugs, empowered residents to be in charge of their neighborhoods. In the 1990s, Mayor Giuliani saw the NYC vacant lot gardeners as a threat to private enterprise, even calling them communists, and basically declared war on the gardeners, forcing them to engage in active fights to preserve gardens and to prevent the land on which they sat from being sold to development schemes.

Carlsson also explores bike culture, like the Critical Mass protests that occur in cities throughout the world typically taking place the last Friday of the month. Bicyclists show that there is a viable, healthy, environmentally friendly and affordable alternative to car culture. Particularly in cities walking, biking or taking public transit provide valuable alternatives to cars, lessening air, noise soil and water pollution. He interviews people who've opened up bike repair spaces to anyone who wants learn. In San Francisco, he focuses on programs that teach bike repair to children in low income neighborhoods. He also interviews people who rebel against mainstream bike culture, with its glossy magazines and spandex. The bike messenger culture, a highly individualistic, very punk subculture, has organized into messenger unions, but one in San Francisco fizzled out because the sponsoring union eventually pulled out and suffered backlash from the courier companies.

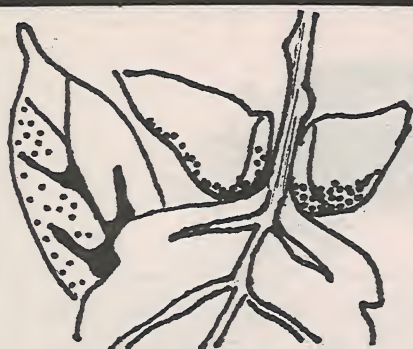
He looks at using open source software against corporate giants like microsoft. And he discusses the Burning Man festival. Although described by its organizers as an experiment in community, radical self-expression, and self-reliance, and promoting an idea of attendees who are all participants with its "no spectators" concept, not allowing monetary exchange so that attendees allegedly learn to think outside of the capitalist structure and re-evaluate "value" by bartering skills and things, Carlsson acknowledges that the festival has become another for-profit enterprise.

Throughout the book, Carlsson asks various people what they think their class background is. They usually respond that they

aren't sure but thought they were some kind of middle class. He takes that to mean that the US working class is not something around which to organize. I think he might be forgetting that the US education system does not explicitly teach people about class. Even in the UK, where people often say they are working class even when they are not, interestingly similar to and yet different from the US where everyone thinks they're middle class from sanitation workers to US Senators. He berates unions over and over because they look at class from an outdated point of view. I agree: unions don't organize people anymore (I think that is the fault of US unions not of unionism). Though unions and the labor movement have been slow to adapt to the changing economy, I don't think that throws out a worker-driven movement.

A part I did like about this book is that it explained the concept of "Multitudes", developed and used by people like Negri, in language that was more on my level, so I finally figured out what it means (there are multiple classes of people instead of one working class).

All in all, the book is an interesting read, though it is a bit choppy and maybe the author jumps to conclusions too quickly. Still, it's cool to see what other people are doing to organize and agitate or self-organize as far as interests outside of my own. I've never been someone who's thought that you can only do one thing ("either, or"), and all else is damned. For any movement to thrive, there has to be a whole lot of people doing all kinds of stuff to resist and reject to the dominant cultures, as well as organizing within it and for a better future beyond it.



Requiem for an Oak Grove

Continued from Page 1

I wonder how I keep jumping into these struggles when the odds are so against us, and yet if we give up because of that, then we automatically lose. I cry for the birds soaring in circles where their home once was and for the students who are so lost but I am uplifted by the community we have woven and the brave and beautiful actions of so many. What have we created? What have we learned?

The tree-sit was quite a sustained effort. We kept aloft a canopy of three to more than a



dozen elves from Dec. 2, 2006 until Sept. 9, 2008. We survived several raids of our support camp and constant police harassment. The University eventually built two fences with barbed wire around the sit, lit up the night with diesel powered lights and kept a mini-police force around us 24-7. When UC attempted to block food being sent to the sitters, a posse of older women calling themselves the

Grandmothers for the Oaks came with a home cooked Thanksgiving meal and continued to supply quality nutrition in a beautiful ritual of defiance every Sunday for almost a year. The support camp, being one of the only places to sleep outdoors without getting a ticket, also attracted the homeless, travelers and crazy people many of whom gave valiantly to the effort. It was a challenging situation where the services provided and the peace that was kept should be appreciated. It was, however, a stretch for the shiny faced college elite to grok the depth of what was going on.

There are critiques that could and should be made. We could have organized better with regular meetings and clear decision making methods. We could honor and hone those who stand out as leaders and insist on honest communication so the group is represented. We could encourage more diverse voices to speak out. We could cast our web for allies more consciously.

We underestimated the Public Relations campaign against us. Many students echoed back UC's propaganda, all of which was easily challenged if given a fair forum. Though the tree-sit got impressive coverage, most of it was sensational and did not represent the core issues we were challenging; turning around human behavior to abet global warming, democratic control of public land, understanding and respecting natural systems, negotiation rather than power plays, corporate takeover of a state university, respecting a Native American burial ground and sacred site, being logical about not building on an earthquake fault, etc. The construction of the high-tech gym is just the first of a long list of bad development projects UC wants to inflict

on the local environment and the future direction of humanity. They have just begun construction of a huge vivisection lab at the head of University Ave and they want to build



dramatically in our fragile Strawberry Creek Canyon, including a lab paid for by BP (formerly British Petroleum) to research genetically engineering plants to provide fuel for American SUV's by industrial monocropping vast areas of third world countries.

But we made a stand against the plan and that is a tremendous victory in itself. The vast wheels and levers of development were challenged. A student stood next to me on the last day of the sit as we watched the last four tree-sitters clinging to the top of the redwood.

We were both inspired, it was clear that these brave men believed with all their heart and had stood with all their might. The student understood that there was a deep and powerful resistance and message and he talked of sharing this with other students. And this is our hope; that the action we took will inspire others that something needs to be changed and that individuals can choose to make a stand. Of course UC sent out its message too; that the system is intransigent to change and that it will use force. But this is the "Big Game" of our time. Can we awaken as a species and turn around our destruction of the web of nature that sustains us before we annihilate ourselves and other species? We have nothing to lose by trying.

As our hearts cracked open with the murder of our tree elders, I felt the flood of love for all the very many who had done something. We wove a community. We shared and learned and strived together. We climbed trees, had meetings, wrote letters, shared acorn pancakes, danced, took the streets, built platforms, cared for each other, ran a bike powered radio station, played drums, distributed flyers, called press conferences, talked to students, floated balloons of food, grew oak saplings, sang, prayed, celebrated with circuses and concerts, went to court, went to city council, went to jail, and held our ground.

And some dared to ask why we weren't saving important trees like those in the Amazon. No, we are protecting the trees right here in our neighborhood and as Ayr suggested, "why don't you go into a bar and ask that question? We are doing something. That is the key to hope. ¡Vivan los Arbooles!

CR to abolish the PRISON-INDUSTRIAL complex

Continued from Page 1

For example, there is fairly uniform agreement that California's now \$10 billion-per-year prison system holds too many people, provides horrendous health and mental health care, underfunds and cuts programming and services, and consistently fails to deliver on its promise of public safety. Nonetheless, California's answer to this disaster has been to make it even bigger, building more prisons and in particular specialized prisons — for women, for elderly prisoners, for the sick, etc.

What's new and more insidious about this expansion is that it has not been couched in "tough on crime" rhetoric that politicians usually employ to justify expansion. Rather, in response to growing anti-prison public sentiment, these plans have been grounded on the rhetoric of "prison reform" and in regard to people in women's prisons: "gender responsiveness."

One current challenge is to continue to debunk the myth that bricks and mortar are an answer to these problems and to make common sense that the only real answer to California's prison crisis is to reduce the

number of people in prison and number of prisons toward the goal of abolition.

HB: How has the anti-prison movement evolved in the last 10 years?

RB: In the last decade, I think the movement has become more coordinated, is growing and has shifted the debate from one about reform to one that includes abolition.

In 1998, while there were numerous people and organizations working around conditions of confinement, the death penalty, etc., and in

I also believe the debate has shifted and unlike a decade ago, abolition is on the table. A prerequisite to seeking any social change is the naming of it. In other words, even though the goal we seek may be far away, unless we name it and fight for it today, it will never come.

HB: What distinctions do you make between "political prisoners," and others, including non-violent and violent offenders?

RB: CR focuses on how the PIC is used as a purported "answer" to social, economic and

state to also not be locked in cages. While acknowledging that people are put in prison for different reasons, we do not make the distinction between people in for "violent" or "nonviolent" offenses because the PIC is not an answer to either.

HB: Anything else to add?

RB: One day, I believe those who fought for abolition will be seen as visionaries. Historian Adam Hochschild notes that there are numerous institutions in history that appeared unchangeable and moreover, small numbers of people have sparked extraordinary change.

Until the late 18th century, when the British slavery abolitionist movement began, the idea of eliminating one of the fundamental aspects of the British Empire's economy was unimaginable. Yet, 12 individuals who first met in a London printing shop in 1787 managed to create enough social turbulence that 51 years later, the slave ships stopped sailing in Britain.

In the US, the first slavery abolitionists were represented as extremists and it took almost a century to abolish slavery. Similarly, many who lived under Jim Crow could not envision a legal system without segregation.

As Hochschild wrote, "The fact that the battle against slavery was won must give us pause when considering great modern injustices, such as the gap between rich and poor, nuclear proliferation and war" and I would add the Prison Industrial Complex. "None of these problems will be solved overnight, or perhaps even in the fifty years it took to end British slavery, but they will not be solved at all unless people see them as both outrageous and solvable."



particular using litigation and research strategies; grassroots organizing challenging the PIC was at a low following the crackdown on the movement in the 1970's and 80's. We believe that a grassroots movement is a necessary prerequisite to change. CR is bringing people together through our conferences, campaigns, and projects toward the goal of helping to build that movement.

political challenges, and clearly a big part of the build up of the PIC followed directly on the political uprisings of the '60s and '70's. CR seeks to abolish the PIC in its entirety, for us that means fundamentally challenging the PIC as an institution. This means that just as we fight for Mumia to not be locked in a cage, we also fight for people convicted of offenses classified as "violent" or "nonviolent" by the

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LOSING THE TREES, FINDING COMMUNITY

the last stages of an urban tree-sit

By Millipede

People keep coming up to me, telling me how sorry they are that we "lost the tree sit in the end". And I understand where they're coming from, but clearly there's more to say about our almost two year long occupation of the Berkeley Oak Grove than that.

Squatting and grass roots organizing are, by their nature, heartbreaking. And the more love we put into a place, the harder it is when they take it away.

For me, the Oak Grove has always been about the trees, but also much more. To see the Grove as a temporary autonomous space where, for a period of time, people came to build strong community and live satisfying, reasonable lives together, is to see us for our accomplishments. As for the Oak Grove as a permanent occupation poised to turn back the forces of capitalism in Berkeley — well, maybe sometimes we don't get everything we want. Yes, we've lost the trees. But we've done so much. Here is a report back from the last several months:

It's been a hell of a summer. On June 17th, 2008 — the day before our much-awaited "big day in court" — UC Berkeley, backed up by Williams Tree Service (extractors out of Watsonville, CA) and A LOT of cops, attacked the tree sit in a pre-dawn raid. Everything we thought we knew about urban tree sit extractions being safer and less unpredictable than deep woods extractions because of increased visibility and media exposure went very quickly out the window, as Williams Tree Service employees (being directed from the ground by the UC Chief of Police) showed over and over again that they were willing (even eager) to risk tree sitters' lives to get us out of the trees. What we experienced during the extractions was basically a very high stakes game of chicken. Extractors cut and untied traverse lines that tree sitters were attached to, rammed us with heavy equipment, cut platforms out from under people's feet, threatened sexual violence against women tree sitters, made super-close approaches with a crane on our precarious defense structure — "the god pod", intentionally sliced into the flesh of two tree sitters with saws on poles, and physically fought and yanked on people who were free climbing with no safety ropes at the tops of trees — as though these were

reasonable ways to get people down. The tree sitters fought back, damaging equipment and defending ourselves by throwing human piss and shit on the extractors, repeatedly getting them to back down from dangerous situations because it was just getting too disgusting for them to hang in there going after us. We did not lock down. Although we honor the tactic,

weeks no substantial amounts of food or water made it up into the trees. The tree sitters were living entirely on emergency stores. Again, due to intense pressure from all sides, the University made the reluctant concession to provide a food and water ration to the tree sitters daily.

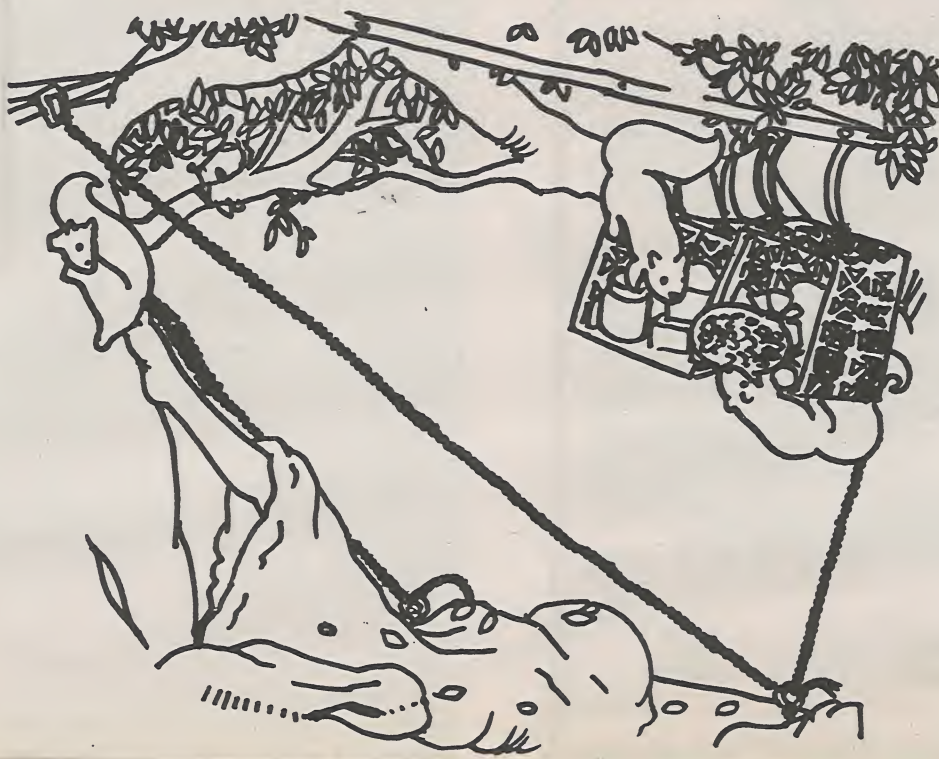
But the food ration was really bad. It was

tree. Tree sitters and ground supporters disrupted this work, but we all knew more was set to come. Cutting began for real on Friday September 5th, and by Tuesday all the trees slated to be cut and all the tree sitters were down. The tree sitters made a deal agreeing to voluntarily turn themselves over to the police after being completely surrounded by extractors, cops, and a scaffolding structure (built that day) which reached all the way (almost) to the top of the one tree which the remaining four tree sitters were occupying after the rest of the grove had been taken. The deal was for the formation of a community review board on future land use decisions in Berkeley. As a final stab in the back, the University promptly denied that any such deal had been reached, and shows no sign of intending to honor the agreement.

It's been months since the siege against us began and it seems like a very long time ago to think back before the attacks. What were we doing with our time, I wonder? The tree sit has been an interesting place full of interesting people from the beginning. We've gone through several distinct eras both in the trees and on the ground and have made many friends, including, of course, the Grandmothers for the Oaks, who are such a tremendous inspiration, our hard working lawyers, and the Panoramic Hill Association (a neighborhood group) who stuck in there with us through the end.

For me, the easy part of my coming of age was figuring out that I didn't want to turn my life over to a boss and a landlord. The hard part has been figuring out what to do instead. I've dedicated the last year of my life to the Oak Grove tree sit. Living in the trees has made me a much happier, more capable person than I was before I came here, and it has birthed a vibrant and radical community that will not go away just because they cut our trees down.

We went up against the largest, richest landowner in town and in the end, the might of the state and the landlord system prevailed over the good work and good intentions of community based organizing. Despite everything, we remain and the reverberations of these connections we've made within ourselves and among each other will be felt for years to come.

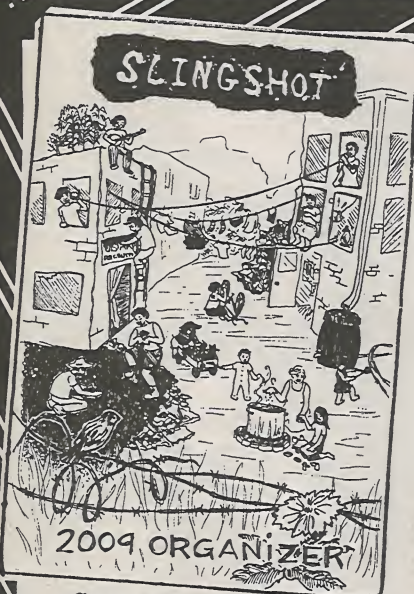


we decided it was best to physically resist the extractions. Catch me if you can.

For three days straight the extractors moved in with overwhelming force, and were, for the most part, unsuccessful at removing people against their will. After three days, due to tremendous pressure on all sides, the university shifted tactics away from force to a slow starvation campaign against the eleven remaining tree sitters who continued to occupy the grove. The area surrounding the tree sit became completely militarized. A ground encampment swelled on both sides of the barricades, erected by cops down Piedmont Avenue as an extra compliment to the double barbed wire fence that had surrounded our grove since November 2007. For almost two

basically a flour, sugar, vegetable shortening diet, and for almost three weeks, Lemon-Vanilla flavored Emergency Ration Bars were the only food the tree sitters (whose numbers at this point had dwindled down to 3-4) had access to. A daring action brought two more tree sitters and a ton of really good food into the trees, and facilitated the brokering of a deal between the University and the ground supporters of the tree sit. A bag of food of our packing and choosing would go up every day. Tree sitters agreed to send down waste.

It would be several weeks before the weary peace between tree people and the cops would be broken. In middle August, Williams Tree Service was back to do strategic cutting of branches known to be pathways between



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Rabbit Calendar

OCTOBER

October 15

World Wide Anti-McDonald's Day - Actions all over the planet

October 15 - 18

Anti-Corp film fest at Brava Theater 2781 24th St. San Francisco \$10

www.counter.org

October 18

London Anarchist Bookfair www.anarchistsbookfair.co.uk

October 21 • 5:30 pm

9th Annual Brower Youth Eco-Awards
Herbst Theater San Francisco
www.earthisland.org

October 22

12th Annual Day of Protest Against Police Brutality

October 22 - 26

Trans' and Women's Action Camp Southern Appalachia www.twac.wordpress.com

October 23 • 6 pm

Down With Patriarchy. Up with Calligraphy. Barter Fair at the Free School 610 Columbia

Street Olympia, Washington
www.TheBeautyofBarter.org - Free

October 25-26

World Beyond Capitalism Conference Free School Community 610 Columbia Street Olympia, WA 98507 (206) 337-1566

Proposals accepted continuously @ www.aeworldbeyoncapitalism.org

October 31 • 6 pm

San Francisco Halloween Critical Mass bike ride. Dress up and ride! Meet at Justin Herman Plaza, Embarcadero BART

JANUARY

January 17 • 3 pm

Slingshot article deadline for issue #99
3124 Shattuck Ave. Berkeley

December 13

Humboldt's First Anarchist Bookfair
Manila, CA
<http://redwoodcurtaincopwatch.net>

December 13

Los Angeles' First Anarchist Bookfair
6120 S. Vermont Ave, LA, CA 90044

December 4 • 7 pm

Mario Savio Awards at UC Berkeley Pauley Ballroom Guest speakers: Robert Kennedy Jr. and MLK Jr. II. Free admission

DECEMBER

November 30 • 4 pm

Slingshot does fresh meat (new volunteers meeting) 3124 Shattuck Ave. Berkeley (510) 540-0751

November 28

Buy Nothing Day

November 21 - 23

Protest torture at School of the Americas Ft. Benning, GA www.soaw.org

November 1

World Vegan Day www.worldveganday.org

NOVEMBER

Free

SLINGSHOT



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Autumn 2008